2-1941
Southern News
Almanac
Birmingham, Ala.

ALABAMA

TENANT FARMERS FACE DISASTER

FEB 6 1941

Thousands Unable To Get Credit For Seed, Feed Or Fertilizer, Union Declares In Open Letter

Thousands of Southern tenant farmers are unable to get credit for seed, feed or fertilizer and will be unable to make a crop this year unless the government takes immediate steps to help them. This situation is revealed in an open letter to Secretary of Agriculture Claude Wickard by Hosie Hart, District President of the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America, (CIO) Dadeville, Alabama.

These thousands of tenant farmers, "after three years of short crops and low prices, now face severe suffering and hardship, unless immediate steps are taken by the government to give them assistance to enable them to make a crop this year," says the UCAPAWA letter. Unless aid is given, the organization states, "they will be uprooted and become a part of the landless migrant army roaming the country seeking jobs or livelihood."

REFUSED FSA LOANS

"In Tallapoosa County," the C. I. O. union charges, "Some 300 tenant families who received some aid through the government 'disaster loans' are now face to face with starvation because the 'disaster loan' set-up has been terminated and nothing has been brought forward to take its place. These tenants have made application to the local Farm Security Administration for loans, and in every case which has come to our attention, have been rejected by the local officials. The reason given by the officials is that these unfortunate tenants still owed a small amount (frequently as low as $10) to the disaster loan set-up. However, it is believed by many of these tenants that the real reason for their rejection is that the big landlords, who have great influence in the local FSA, and who are more and more going over to wage-labor operation of their land, are desirous of keeping a large supply of landless wage-labor in the neighborhood."

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Another way, according to the union, by which the landlords are preventing their tenants from getting the necessary seed loans to make a crop is by refusing to waive their priority on rent, claims in favor of the landlord before, making a seed loan to a tenant.

DEMAND FIXED RENT

"It is our position," concludes the UCAPAWA letter, "that the rent claims of the landlord are already exorbitant, and at best, leave the tenant insufficient money to give his family the most meagre standard of living. Our union demands that the landlord shall accept a fixed rent, in kind, which should be approximately 400 pounds of cotton per year for a one-horse farm This is made necessary by the continuation of the acreage reduction plan of the government, and by the fact that the costs of living for the common people are rising in this war period."

The letter calls on Secretary Wickard "to take immediate steps to meet this critical situation."

In refusing seed olans to tenants who still owe money to to the disaster loan set-up, the FSA is going back on its promise to the borrowers made a year and a half ago, charges Gerald Harris, Secretary of the State Organizing Committee of the Farmers' Union.

"The disaster loan was decided on at a conference in Montgomery in the summer of 1939 as an emergency measure to aid flood sufferers," Harris told the Southern News Almanac. "It was understood at that conference that the FSA would have the right to grant either direct relief or rehabilitation loans. It was also understood that the FSA would have the right to cancel disaster loans where the borrower was unable to pay. And it was especially and specifically understood that failure to repay the disaster loan should not make the borrower ineligible to get the seed loan necessary to make his 1941 crop. Even if these Tallapoosa County tenants owed as much as $100 on the disaster loan they still should receive their seed loans, according to the understanding that was reached at the Montgomery conference."

SMALL FARMERS' FIGHT

The present situation in Tallapoosa County, Alabama, is just the latest episode in the long drama of the up-hill fight of the American small farmer to hold his land.

In the first stage of the battle hundreds of thousands of small farmers lost title to their holdings through mortgage and foreclosure but remained on the land, working it as tenants and sharecroppers.

The resulting situation was summarized as follows in 1937 by the Report of the President's Committee on Farm Tenancy:

"For the past 55 years there has been a continuous and marked decrease in the proportion of operating owners and an accompanying increase in the proportion of tenants. Tenancy has increased from 25 per cent of all farmers in 1880 to 42 per cent in 1935. Because of debt the actual equity of operating owners is far less than these figures indicate. In some of our States, among them a number settled under the homestead system little more than a generation ago, it is estimated that the equity of operating owners in their land is little more than one-fifth. Nearly four-fifths is in the hands of landlords and mortgage holders.

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In the present stage of the battle, mechanization is being introduced and hundreds of thousands of family-sized farms are disappearing altogether, being absorbed by larger farms, operated by wage labor.

FORCED OFF LAND

The number of American farms dropped by 716,562 between 1936 and 1940, Z. R. Pettet, chief statistician for agriculture in the Census Bureau, revealed last December. These figures mean that, during a five year period, 700,000 American farm families were forced off the land and compelled either to join the army of homeless migrant farm workers or move to the cities to swell the ranks of the nine million unemployed.

The plight of these families forced off the land was dramatized for the whole nation by "Grapes of Wrath."

In spite of this situation, the federal budget for the new fiscal year which the President proposed to Congress last month cuts 187 million dollars from the Department of Agriculture appropriation, of which 45 million will come out of farm benefit payment and 35 million out of the surplus commodities program

Advertiser
Montgomery, Ala.

Alabama Has 231,746 Farms, Fewest Reported Since 1910

UNIVERSITY, ALA., June 18.—Alabama has 231,746 farms, the smallest reported since 1910, according to the 1940 Census of Agriculture Bulletin received this week by the Bureau of Business Research, University of Alabama.

The number of white farm operators reached its peak in 1935 while the number of negro operators was largest in 1910. The number of negro operators dropped from 110,443 to 73,364 in 1940.

Whites operated 81.4 per cent of the farm acreage, according to calculations of the Bureau of Business Research, while negroes operated 18.6 per cent. The average acreage per farm operated by whites was 98.4, and the average farm operated by negroes totaled 43.5 acres.

Cullman County reported the largest number of farms with a total of 6,877. DeKalb County ranked second with 6,526. Cullman also led in 1935 in number of farms, followed by Madison and Dallas. Cullman County farms were relatively small, averaging 57.2 acres. Only Jefferson, Marshall and Walker have smaller average size farms.

The Bureau of Business Research's analysis of census figures indicates the importance of the Black Belt as a cattle raising section. Of the nine counties in the State reporting more than 20,000 cattle and calves over three months old, only two, Baldwin and Monroe, are not in the Black Belt.

Cullman and DeKalb Counties, however, lead in the number of cows milked. These two counties also lead in the number of chickens on farms.

Birmingham, Ala. News
November 15, 1941

Hundreds Of Farmers Displaced By Defense Are Given New Starts

This Time They're At Work Producing Dairy Products For Uncle Sam

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — (AP) — Hundreds of Southern farmers who yielded their farms and homes to sudden need for camps, ammunition factories and airports, are at work on the land again.

They are clearing, building and planning for a new kind of farming, for many of them, that will produce not cotton and tobacco only, but the milk, eggs, vegetables and meat called for in the Department of Agriculture's campaign of food for freedom.

Near Anniston, Ala., where 492 farmers were moved from a 36,640-acre ammunition dump site, and in nearby Talladega County where 210 families were displaced by a powder plant, a number of dairy poultry and vegetable specialty farms are being developed by displaced tenant farmers, working under the direction of the Farm Security Administration.

"The brick store farm," a 2,300-acre plantation near Anniston is being turned into a cooperative dairy farm. Twenty separate farming units are almost completed, each with a house, large barn for feed, and a milking house equipped with a cement floor.

The cooperative part of this new venture will come in this way:

A community cooling station, with a full time manager in charge, will care for all milk produced by the "brick store" farmers and other small dairymen in the neighborhood, marketing will be done under a single contract with Grade A distributors in a nearby town. By next Fall, milk production from the 20 units, Farm Security officials estimate, will be around 700 gallons a day.

Tractors, mowers and other heavy farm machinery which no one of these dairy cooperators can use profitably on his small acreage, are being purchased by the Cooperative Association and used by its members on a fee basis.

Like most of the approximately 17,000 acres of land optioned in this section by Farm Security through a "relocation corporation" to serve as new homes for some of the families it has helped move, much of the brick store tract has been lying idle. The rest was being operated in large tractor units, with wage hands doing most of the work.

The century old brick building from which the farm takes its name marks a once well known stage coach crossing. The old store now serves as a storehouse.

Other "relocation farms" having a total of 142 family units are now in the process of development in Calhoun and Talladega Counties. Groups of Negroes are working on several units where chickens, hogs and some truck farming will save them from sole dependence on cotton. Others will have half a dozen cows and will sell sour cream.

Projects similar to these "relocation farms" in the Anniston-Childersburg area of East North Central Alabama are being developed by displaced farmers and the FSA near Huntsville, Ala., Huntsville and Hazlehurst, Ga., Moncks Corners (Santee-Cooper) and Columbia, S. C., as well as half a dozen other localities in the Southeast.

Lafayette, Ala., Sun
November 12, 1941

What Negro Farmers Are Doing

NEGRO FARMERS SAVE TURNIP GREEN HAY

With an ever increasing desire to show their patriotism and cooperation with the National Agricultural program and the more recent "Food for Freedom Program" five farm families have taken advantage of the instruction of the Negro Farm Agent in saving Turnip Green Hay. This product of the garden will come in very handy in supplying leafy vegetables for the families during the winter after cold has killed most turnips.

Says the Adams family of White Plains: "We pulled our turnips while they were in the salad stage, shook the dirt off them (but did not wash them), spread the greens out in a shady spot until they were dry then stored the turnip green hay in nice clean chicken feed sacks hung up where they would not get mashed, and that's all there is to the stoarage part. Now for the eating; we haven't tried that yet, but the agent says all you have to do is put the hay in water for about three or four hours, or until they can be washed and treated just as you would regular turnip greens.

Advertiser
Montgomery, Ala.

Alabama Leading Other States In Changing Farm Economy

By ATTICUS MULLIN

The agricultural leadership in Alabama has accomplished more in the last 20 years than the similar leadership has accomplished in any other Southern State and for that the writer takes off his hat to the Auburn extension service, the experiment stations, and the membership of the Alabama Farm Bureau.

When the boll weevil came to Alabama in 1916, the cotton economy that we had known for nearly 100 years faced a change. Today that change has been brought about without too much disruption of the then existing agricultural economy except in the prairie section of the State. In the prairie section pastures and cattle and dairying took the place of cotton as the leading crop. But in taking that place, cattle and pastures and dairying displaced thousands of farm hands, mostly negroes. And that these negro farm hands have been reemployed in other sections has been a major achievement.

The Auburn extension service with the experiment stations, early set to work to make a new agricultural economy for Alabama, particularly that part of Alabama South of Jefferson County. And today the results are apparent. The writer has visited all of the counties in the section and The Advertiser has carried articles showing the increase in cattle, hogs, dairying, and diversified crop products. In other words, the boll weevil has remade the agricultural economy of Alabama and has done it rapidly. Other Southern States have not shown so much advance. We had always heard that the Auburn extension service was far and away ahead of the extension services in other Southern States or even in the nation and now we are certain of it by exhaustive investigation on the ground in each county.

Too much praise cannot be given the fine work of the various experiment stations in Alabama in getting the farmer safely away from a cotton economy that had been destroyed by the boll weevil. These experiment stations over Alabama have had a remarkable history in the last 20 years and one that some agronomist should write in the next few years.

The writer believes that much of the success of the Auburn extension service and the experimental work has been achieved through more rapid communication between counties and between beats and rural communities. In the days when experiments had to be carried to the farmer through pamphlets and the mails, very little was accomplished. Good roads and the automobile have made it possible for farmers to visit experiment stations and see for themselves how things are growing. To hear about growing things in a pamphlet and seeing growing things are entirely different. Nearly 100,000 farmers visit Alabama experiment stations every year. They see what is done. And therefore, through the years, every farmer in Alabama has visited an experiment station and the county agents have told the farmers what they could do in the same way and by using the same methods.

We believe no greater tribute could be paid to the Auburn extension service with the consequent experiment stations than to say that they have prevented the Alabama farmer from being a serf. The farmers are coming back after long years of adversity and communal farming, in a few years, will not be necessary in the opinion of the writer.

To all of those who have contributed to the change in Alabama agriculture, we say all praise. To the extension service and its fine organization and to the farm bureau organization and the co-operative efforts of the Department of Agriculture of the State, we also send praise.

How 12,990 At The Bottom Live On Biggest Cotton Plantation In World

APR 3 2 1941

(This is the second of two stories about "the world's biggest cotton plantation" and how its people live. Last week we told of how the 10 at the top live. This week we talk of the 12,990 at the bottom.)

OCEOLA, Ark. — "Sometimes a man knows what he can't prove. I'll tell you what I know and you can judge it."

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The old colored man who is one of the 8,000-odd wage workers on the Lee Wilson place and who like his white neighbor across the road belongs to the CIO agricultural workers union stated the case of the wage workers against the Wilson Plantation for us. It was a story of such sharp dealing that the government has already intervened to a limited degree and in a way that has not yet helped the lot of the wage workers who farm Lee Wilson & Co.'s $7,000,000 plantation.

When the AAA law was passed it included a provision that acreage reduction checks to a single farmer could not exceed $10,000, which sounds pretty generous to the big farmers in itself, but the 88,000 acres of the Lee Wilson Place called for so much more than that that they began to look around for a way to get it.

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Four years ago the Wilson plantation was suddenly divided up into rented land. It was a coincidence—nothing more, they said—that all of the former riding bosses were now "renters." By this arrangement the renters would be entitled under the law to the AAA benefit checks and not the landlord, who would be supposed to get only his cash rent.

So what the old Negro wage worker and dozens of others, both white and Negro told us they "believe, but can't prove" is that the former riding bosses are now "written up" as renters, but agreements exist between them and the Wilson plantation so that their acreage reduction checks are cashed and the money, all or most of it, goes back to Wilson.

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That the government also shares this opinion is shown by the fact that a large percentage, some say about 50 per cent, of these payments were tied up by the AAA and many of them still have not been paid for 1938, 1939 and 1940.

OWNER STILL PAYS

"The way it is with us here," the Negro wage worker told us, "is that V. G. Mann, who they now say is a renter, works us for six days, then when he gets ready to pay off he goes up to the main office and gets Wilson's big black pay roll book reads off our names and gives us our money—what little we get.

"That's what I mean when I say a man can know a thing he can't prove sometimes. It's not like a man who was really a renter and hiring folks himself to work the land that he would pay off from somebody else's pay roll book. Now, is it?"

This fine old man told us, standing in front of his little whitewashed shack how desperate the battle is to keep out of debt. Once that fight is lost a man and his family loses almost the last shred of security and independence. Because once you owe Wilson your wages and your borrowings come not in cash but in "brozene," little brass coins which Wilson has minted. They run in denominatitons of one cent, five cents, ten cents, 25 cents and a dollar.

In your pocket they jingle like money. They are money in every respect except one—they can only be spent in Wilson stores. So that's why, when a man loses the battle against debt—and it's not an equal fight—that the last bit of his independence is gone. The narrow circuit of his earnings runs from Wilson to him in brass coin and from the worker back to Wilson. What Wilson pays out, Wilson gets back; but what the worker pays out is 12 hours a day of hard labor and what he gets back is a grudging little bit of provisions which all goes down on Wilson's books as items increasing the worker's debt and insecurity.

HOW HE GOT IT

There's one thing we haven't told yet and that's important. It's how old Lee Wilson, who died in 1933, got all this land. It all started in the 1880s when there was still plenty of land in Arkansas open for homesteading. But anybody knows that one man can't homestead 88,000 acres of land.

We found a white farmer, a man who had been an independent operator on this land many years ago with a pretty big place—a little less than a thousand acres—that he rented from Wilson until he was crowded off for paying sharecroppers the full sale price of cotton. He told us the simple story of how Wilson got the land and it began with this all-important sentence:

"You see Lee Wilson had some money to start with, which was more than any other homesteaders had."

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Money to "start with" meant money for improvements. Drainage canals which eliminate sink holes of stagnant water in the bottom lands and in the end result in long level fields to plow straight furrows as far as you can see. But more important, money to lend your your neighbor when times are hard. Foreclosures follow. The plantation grows. The drainage ditches extend. The fields get bigger. Little clusters of shanties for wage workers spring up that look like shack towns railroad workers often live in. Company commissaries spring up at cross roads. And in the bigger towns, as profits accumulate, banks come to life.

The banks lend more money. Hard times come. There are more foreclosures and the fields get bigger still.

KEEPS ON GROWING

This is what Lee Wilson did. And **he queer part of it is that it keeps** on working that way in spite of the fact that the old man has been dead for seven years. It gets to be automatic. Once the money is all in one place it multiplies itself. But the people get poorer. More of them are in debt every year. More renters become sharecroppers. And more sharecroppers become wage workers. And still the Wilson land grows.

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This all would seem to be a pretty hopeless picture if it weren't for the people who live on this land. Already they are looking to themselves and to each other to find a way out.

The solution they have hit on was the natural one—union. Hundreds of them already belong to the CIO's United Agricultural Workers and the union has put forward for them collectively the demands they could not present alone: payment in cash money instead of "brozene," fool-proof accounting for sharecroppers of returns from cotton sales. As matters now stand sharecroppers never know how much a bale of cotton is sold for and they may not even know its weight.

Your News Almanac reporter saw one of Wilson's statements to a sharecropper on which only debt charges were itemized. Credit items look like this: "C[illegible] bl. cot., $41.20." Nowhere did it say how much the cotton brought, nor how much the bale weighed.

And another answer, a bigger one that goes much further toward a solution of the insecurity of these people, is also being organized by the union—buying clubs, through which the wage workers can break the company commissary's control on their lives, get their supplies for less money and eventually look to the formation of full scale cooperatives with a credit union of their own to supply their credit needs.

WANT COOPERATIVES

And lastly, the union expects, through the strong organization of wage workers and sharecroppers who want to break out of Wilson's plantation slavery, to induce the government to take over tracts by lease or purchase on which the union cooperatives can build their own farming cooperatives, supplying all of their own needs, and dividing the profits fairly through full democratic control of the entire business machinery of their cooperatives.

Can this be done? The union says it can and says it can prove it. Harry Koger, regional president of this Union, points to the Missco Homesteads project of the federal government near Marie, Ark., as an example to prove the point—both on a basis of the successes and the failures at Missco.

Missco project already provides land for 160 families. They enjoy a degree of security far above that of people on the Wilson place. But they do not enjoy a full measure of either security or independence. The reason for that is that the federal government, in setting up the project, was afraid to give the Missco families full democratic control of their cooperative.

Miscco is governed by a board of five, of which the real homesteaders have only two members. This year seven or eight families left the land because of disputes with the board about their payments or loans.

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"In most cases," one farmer who was leaving told us, "we knew that we could have settled all of these things ourselves in a meeting. They told us that we were going to have the biggest share in running Missco ourselves, and it just hasn't worked out that way."

But everywhere—and your News Almanac reporter talked to dozens of these people—the people were full of confidence that if they could win full democratic control of the project, Missco could become a little paradise.

"There's no better land than this anywhere in the United States," Mr. L. E. Gardner, one of the ones who is leaving Missco told us. "It looks like it ought to pay good money to the people who work it. I'm satisfied it will when we have real cooperatives that we can run and control ourselves."

"That's what our union is working for," Mr. Koger told him.

"Yes, and that's why I'm staying in the union," said Mr. Gardner. "I want to live in one of them places when we get them."

Southern News
Almanac
Birmingham, Ala.

Life On Dixie's Biggest Plantation Is Swell For 10: Hell For 12,990

MAR 27 1941

"Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field until there be no room in the land." (Isaiah, 5-8.)

MARION, Ark.—"When a man or a family of folks own as much land as the Wilsons do it gets to be like a blight on the countryside for miles around."

An Evangelical Baptist minister who has nine churches north of here and scattered west toward the Mississippi River made the remark as he stood in front of the Marion Hardware store with a couple of new plow points. The fine old man will have to remain nameless in this story as will all other poor people we mention. You will know why this is necessary as we go on with our visit to "the world's largest cotton plantation."

MAR 27 1941

A fine road runs through Marion. One of the best in Arkansas. It's U. S. Highway 61 and it bends north to parallel the river through Blytheville and Sikeston to St. Louis.

It is 12 miles north of here on "Sixty-One" before Wilson's land actually starts, but if you see the quick glance of suspicion in the eyes of any prosperous merchant or the lowering voices among poor folks when the name or the business dealings of Lee Wilson is mentioned you know that the influence of that man is a powerful thing here.

They will tell you that the same thing is true a hundred and fifty miles away over in Little Rock where the laws are made for poor folks by mostly rich folks' legislators.

MAR 27 1941

But Lee Wilson himself is not alive. He died in 1933. So it's not exactly true to say that Lee Wilson rules these 88,000 acres of land—as big as many a whole county—and the lives of the 13,000 people that live on it, but it is really the accumulation of wealth that old Lee Wilson left.

Your News Almanac reporter wanted to see how these people fare on this land and was fortunate enough to find Harry Koger, district president of the United Agricultural Workers' Union, about to make a trip through the plantation and arranged to go along. Harry Koger, it might be said in passing, knows more of the sharecroppers and wage workers in this part of the country than anybody outside of, maybe, Lee Wilson's head pay roll clerk. He knows everybody.

So after talking to the fine old preacher in Marion we drove north through Frenchmans Bayou. Wilson's land starts about a mile beyond. Not solid at first, but in 640 acre tracts, the units land was first laid out in Arkansas for homesteading.

The Lee Wilson blocks get closer together as you drive up the road toward Joiner, five miles north. It is there that you pass the last independent gin for nearly 30 miles. Lee Wilson & Co. owns all the rest from here to Oceola, 20 miles further north and from there 20 miles on northwest to Dell and then from Dell back to Joiner.

"IT'S ALL WILSON'S

Three miles on above Joiner Lee Wilson's land starts solid. We stopped for coffee in Evadale just inside the solid part and the man who waited on us said "sure, this is a Lee Wilson place." He wanted to know if we weren't strangers when we asked if the gin a few hundred yards away was Lee Wilson's too. "It's all Wilson's, mister," he said.

MAR 27 1941

The next town on up the road is named Wilson. You might not be able to find it on your map although it is easy to see that it is a bigger town than either Evadale or Joiner. It is unincorporated. We asked about that, too. A man in overalls told us he "reckoned that when they took stock there wasn't enough here that wasn't Lee Wilson's to make a spot on the map."

MAR 27 1941

Old Lee Wilson used to say pretty much the same thing, they will tell you. He liked to tell his friends "I own everything in Wilson but the depot and that's got my name on it."

Wilson, Ark., is where they still run the plantation. There's a lot to see there if you know what to look for. If you don't you might miss it.

For instance, you might think that the cotton oil mill, which really looks like four big cotton oil mills, was just a pretty big mill if you didn't know that Wilson owns that too and that every cottonseed it crushed comes from a Wilson farm just as every drop of profit that is squeezed out of this land and its people goes into a Wilson bank account. We didn't have time to ask how many tons of oil they press, but your correspondent has seen a good many cotton oil mills and he never saw a bigger one.

20-ROOM HOUSE

There's another thing you might miss and that's a fine old house set back in the cottonwood trees and that's where the widow of Lee Wilson still lives. It's not quite as conspicuous as you would expect, but its 20-odd rooms are enough so that a tractor mechanic said he wondered how an old lady like that could use them all.

But there's one house in Wilson that you won't miss. It is nearly a quarter of a mile back from the main road, but it is new and it has no modest trees to hide it. It begins with a stable for fine horses and a garage for many cars and a white picket fence connects these with the mansion all gleaming white with fine tall columns. Off on the left is a swimming pool and around it are clusters of blue and white lawn chairs and big bright umbrellas over them. But if you guessed that's where a Wilson lives you'd be wrong.

That's Joe Crane's house, and Joe is Wilson's superintendent. Joe gets a salary of $35,000 a year and in addition to that he has 3,000 acres of land that he operates as his own.

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"Joe Crane is the man that old Lee Wilson connected with when he found out that Roy Wilson, his only son, wasn't going to be anything but a drunk—which he still is. Mister, Joe Crane is so hard that his eyelids squeak when he blinks 'em and just about that tight." That was the way a wage worker who once was a sharecropper, sized up the "big boss" of the biggest cotton plantation in the world.

There's one man named Wilson that does some of the work of running the place, but he is a grandson of Lee Wilson whose name was Joe Nelson Smith until the old man adopted him as a full son for inheritance purposes and had his name changed to Wilson. The old man didn't like the idea of Roy's being the only male heir in his will.

Two people told us that Joe Nelson Smith Wilson gets $25,000 a year and one said he gets $15,000 from the plantation. We couldn't be sure just what the figure was but we found out that "Joe Nelson," as they call him, "is a hard fellow to put your finger on. One week he's in New York, then he's back later he's in Europe." He has his here, and then a couple of weeks own aeroplane and is seen riding in any one of four automobiles.

HOW ABOUT OTHERS?

So that's the way the folks live on the Wilson plantation. That is, that's the way about ten folks live, including the families of Roy and Joe Nelson and Superintendent Smith. But how about the other 12,990 folks?

We told you about the ten. We will tell you about the 12,990 in more detail next week. But here are a few of the things we found and about which we will tell you in detail later.

In the first place about 90 per cent of the wage workers are in debt.

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Now those who are in debt naturally have to borrow. But on Wilson's place when you borrow or "get furnished" you don't get money you get what is called "brozene." Brozene looks something like money but unlike money it can only be spent at the Lee Wilson stores which dot the crossroads over this 40-mile stretch of country. And so what you borrow, and also what you pay interest on, is good only for what Lee Wilson has to sell and at prices Lee Wilson chooses to fix.

Another thing was that most of the people aren't working now. As a matter of fact there are just two times a year that Lee Wilson needs a lot of people to work and that's at cotton chopping time and cotton picking time. Nowadays tractors displace thousands of plow hands and other machine operations replace others. This of course was reflected in the fact that most of the folks we saw hardly had enough to eat in their little shacks.

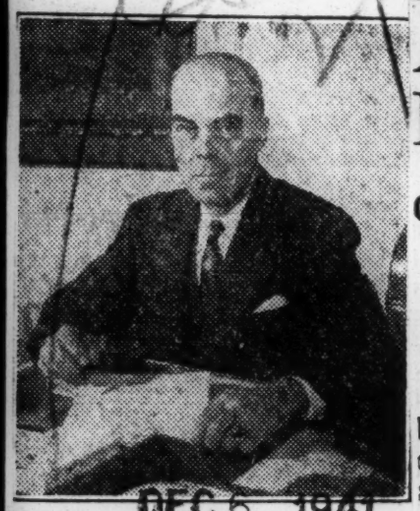
Finally, as affects the lives of people, there is the question of the AAA which was supposed to work for the little fellow but which seems to be doing just the opposite. It is possible, by a little cheating and a little connivance from government officials to turn these AAA benefit checks back to the big plantation owners and away from the people who needed the help in the first place. "Sometimes a man can know a thing he can't prove," a wage worker for Wilson told us and then he told us how he "knows" the people don't get what they should from the government checks. We will tell you what he, and many others told us next week and let you judge for yourself.

This is the first of two articles.

2-1941
Journal and Guide
Norfolk, Virginia

D.C.
Black Dispatch
Oklahoma City, Okla.

Promoted



DEC 6 1941

Raymond J. Weir of the U. S. Department of Agriculture who has been promoted to chief of Administrative Services Division in the Office of Plant and Operations. Mr. Weir, who has been in the Department since 1910, is the first member of his race to serve as chief of an administrative division. He is a native of Chicago and a graduate of the Chicago Metropolitan Business College.

Many Negroes To Suffer If Agriculture Departments Returned to State Control

MAR 8 1941

One Percent of Total Membership of Farm Bureau Is Negro

Local Control Would Exclude Negroes

MAR 8 1941

WASHINGTON.—(ANP)—A bitter battle to the finish looms on the horizon with the uncovering of the plans recently submitter to congress whereby the department of agriculture would be shorn of five of is most liberal bureaus and their work turned back to individual states. Hundreds of Negroes now employed by these bureaus would be thrown out of work and the general progressive program of certain departments would be scrapped in their entirety, it is reported.

Backed by the strong conservative farm bureau federation, the plan would remove from Washington the AAA, Soil Conservations Service Surplus Marketing division and a part of the bureau of agricultural economics.

These divisions have been most liberal in their attitude toward colored workers as well as farmers with FSA having 46 Negro clerks, stenographers, messengers and administrative personnel in Washington and 150 field workers, all but 29 of whom are of the professional class, earning between $1600 and $3200 per annum.

All of these positions would be eliminated and the program as instituted for the benefit of the farmers farthest down, checked, it is believed.

MAR 8 1941

The fight grew out of the desire of the Farm Bureau federation to gain control of the department of agriculture and to dictate its policies.

With a membership of many hundreds of farmers whose incomes are over the $500 annual membership of the farm bureau is Negro. And in the South, where the bureau is strongest, Negro members are not permitted to attend meetings.

MAR 8 1941

Opposing the actions of the farm bureau workers will be the Farmers Union, a growing organization which plans to combat any action the bureau takes.

Every liberal member of the department of agriculture is lined up against the plan which will affect migratory workers and sharecroppers particularly, and, inasmuch as the largest percentage of low income farmers are Negroes, they too, will feel the full impact of the bureau plan.

MAR 8 1941

All the way down the line from the administrative officers to field workers, the federal part would be eliminated and states themselves would be called upon to administer the program.

While it is reported that the same number of persons would have to be employed, the selection of these workers would be left entirely to the states and in this way there is a growing conviction that Negroes would be eliminated entirely.

Although the battle has been going on for some time, it has just come to light with the presentation by the Farm Bureau Federation to congress of its plans for the future of agriculture.

Many Negroes

(Continued from page one)

standard set by the department as low-income farmers, few Negroes belong to the bureau. It is reported by an official in agriculture that to the best of his knowledge, only about 1 per cent of the total

Lake City, Fla., Gazette
March 7, 1941

Praise for Our Negro Farmers

"Florida's negro farmers" as The Tampa Tribune said editorially, some days ago, "always make a good showing for themselves and their products at the State Fair, and at other exhibits, State and national. It is pleasing to note that the negro farm exhibit at this fair was pronounced by experts the largest and best ever made. It demonstrated that these industrious and intelligent growers are capable of noducing any product that white farmers produce. In the awards made for the exhibit negro farmers of Alachua and Leon Counties excelled in prize money and number of points, respectively. Jefferson, Columbia and Hamilton ranked next in order in selections made by experienced judges. Florida's negro farmers are prducing two items which are figuring largely and favorably in the State's agricultural advancement—the new variety of sweet potatoes, known as Flo-Rico Yams, and the bottled cane syrup, which has developed a big demand throughout the country. This syrup was perfected in the Florida Agricultual and Mechanical College, the State school for negroes, and is another of the constructive achievements which have been credited to that institution. Through the active interest and promotion of a co-operative negro farmers association, with A. A. Turner as its untiring human dynamo, Flo-Rico Yams are now being grown in commercial quantities in 38 counties, and one farmer in Leon County made the record of 225 bushels from one acre. The negro exhibit, besides its creditable demonstation of the achievements of Florida negroes in agriculture, also showed the progress of the race in handicraft, flowers, art and education."

Ocala, Fla., Evening Star
June 16, 1941

FLORIDA'S NEGRO FARMERS

Announcement in Tampa Saturday by P. T. Streider, manager of the Florida Fair Association, that a special building will be provided at the 1941 fair for the display of the products of the state's negro farmers is a high testimonial to the substantial progress being made by the negro men and women who till the soil in this state.

The negro farmers of Florida have consistently made one of the best agricultural displays at the big fair in Tampa. Now, with a building set aside for their exclusive use, they will undoubtedly strive to outstrip their previous efforts, not only in display but in production.

It is of interest to note, in connection with this recognition of the position negro farmers have established for themselves in Florida agriculture, the progress that hey are making in the cultivation of sweet potato and sugarcane crops.

Under the direction of specialists and agronomists from the state extension service, farm agents in Jackson, Columbia, Hamilton and Marion counties began a series of demonstrations in 1938 with sweet potato and sugarcane crops, which have expanded into forty counties. Best individual yield reported in 1940, grown by Joe Austin, Tallahassee, 225 bushels on one acre. Best yield 1940, 22 farmers in Jackson county averaged 157 1-2 bushels on one acre.

A bulletin isued by the Florida Farmers Cooperative Association tells of the remarkable success of John Mizell, Hamilton county farmer, who shipped the first carload of chewing sugarcane sold in Florida. Mizell received orders this spring for seed sugarcane from his 1940 crop, amounting to $500 more than he could fill. New profits earned by Mizell on his 1938 and 1939 sugarcane crop enabled him to build a new home and barn.

A. A. Turner, of the Agricultural and Mechanical College, Tallahassee, who directs the colored agricultural county agents, introduced the "copper skin" variety of sweet potatoes and was instrumental in perfecting the "Flocane" syrup which is marketed by the colored cooperative assocation. Turner is an indefatigable worker and it is largely through his efforts that the negro farmers of Florida are setting new crop records.

Quincy, Fla., Times
October 2, 1941

Negro Farming Here Improving

Gadsden County is one of the leading negro farming counties in Florida, with a total of 725 farm families owning, renting or share cropping 60,000 acres of land. A steady improvement in crops and living conditions has resulted from educational programs in recent years, including development of additional cash crops suitable for small farms and emphasis on having each farm as far as possible produce its own basic food and feed.

This year, much emphasis is being laid on food supplies as an aid to defense.

Most of the work is under direction of Diana, H. Bouie, home demonstration agent, and Russell H. Stephens, county agent, for negro work.

The county has 16 adult home demonstration clubs among negro women with 271 members, and 303 girls in 4-H clubs. Stress is placed on better gardens and orchards, along with poultry and livestock, to assure balanced food supplies and food for canning and preserving. Before a negro county agent was assigned in 1934, no negro families owned steam pressure cookers. Now 114 households are equipped with them, and 4,438 containers of food were put up for home use last season.

The women and girls also are taught health and sanitation principles, how to select and make clothing, care of children and maintenance of family relations.

More than 1,000 mattresses have been made by negro families for their own use under the Federal mattress program.

Farm negroes have raised $500 for a community center at Jenkins Carter Park, near the crossroads store, an acre of land with a temporary shelter. It is hoped, with the aid of further contributions, to build a permanent community house there.

Better cattle and new cash crops, as well as food and feed crops for home consumption, are emphasized in work among the negro men. Sun tobacco remains the chief money crop, and the county agent, in collaboration with the North Florida Experiment Station, endeavors to help farmers meet the hazards of insects and uncertain weather as they affect that crop.

Sweet potatoes are an outstanding hope of the time being as a new cash crop. Copper skin porto rico sweets are being more widely grown each year. Flue-heated beds have been established in the Robertsville and Shiloh communities, and from these 125,000 plants were obtained this year and 300 bushels of early potatoes were sold on Florida and New York markets.

Encouragement of better cattle and hogs is another important phase of work among the negro farmers. One has built up a profitable business from beef cattle and fertilizer in the last four years, Stephens reported. Better hog breeding stock and better feeding are expected to enlarge the chance of the negro farmer to make hogs a cash as well as home food factor.

Emphasis is placed on work among negro boys, with 215 members of 13 4-H clubs carrying on pig, poultry and vegetable projects.

Both Stephens and Diana Bouie in discussing their work commented on the assistance given by the Board of Public Instruction and farm aid agencies in general.

Tampa, Fla. Tribune
November 14, 1941

Negro Farmers At Fair

AN ADDED attraction for the coming Florida Fair, Feb. 3-11, will be the educational exhibits in the new negro agricultural exhibit building. In this building, 50 by 150 feet, will be displayed seven county exhibits competing for the county special awards. These exhibits will consist of different products grown on the farm.

Each year the Fair management is putting more stress on exhibits of the educational type and the exhibits for this building will be prepared along that line with sugar cane, sugar cane syrup and sweet potatoes, showing the results accomplished in recent years by negro growers of these crops.

Other exhibits of education value and of much interest to the public will be housed in this building, showing the progress of negro farmers, in the counties worked by vocational agricultural teachers. The government exhibit prepared under direction of the "Triple A" program will occupy space in this building.

Work has begun already preparing the booths by the farm agents and farmers from the various counties, who have made use of all available space for this exhibit. Space in the main exhibit hall for the school exhibit and woman's work of the negro department, 50 by 180 feet, has all been assigned, making a total of 1,650 square feet of exhibit space to be occupied by the negro exhibit, which, it is believed, will be the largest exhibit of the kind ever assembled, showing the progress of the race in Florida.

2-1941

GENERAL

Chicago Bee
Chicago, Illinois

Negro Farmer, Agricultural Preparedness

By ALBION HOLSEY
Field Officer, AAA, for ANP

The southern Negro farmer is making a valuable and vital contribution to the national defense program through his impressive activities in the field of agriculture.

Defense through agriculture includes ample reserves of food and proper diets to insure better national health for fighting men, industrial workers and the nation as a whole.

Through many provisions of the AAA including the ever-normal granary our nation has protective reserves of wheat and corn and through the live-at-home program of the agricultural extension service individual farmers are increasing supplies of home grown food products for family use.

So much evidence has been assembled to show that inadequate diets and malnutrition are chief causes of poor health that the division of consumer protection of the National Defense Advisory commission has undertaken a nation-wide campaign "to improve the nutritional value of cheap staple foods," "increase the food purchasing power of low-income groups," "educate the people on proper food selection" and "broaden the activities of "governmental agencies now conducting nutritional programs." The nation's health as a measure for national defense.

Negro home demonstration agents, home economics teachers and home economists under the FSA are placing a new emphasis on home gardens, canning and preserving foods and budgeting the home pantry supply on a proper diet basis. For 1941, the AAA has extended its benefits to include more gardens and canning for home use.

Sec. Claude R. Wickard of the department of agriculture has recently asked the farmers to step up egg production during the next 15 months to 10 million cases of 30 dozen each above normal production and adds that the department will support long term egg prices until June, 1943 . . . at a figure which should make egg production profitable."

P. H. Stone, Negro state extension leader for Georgia reports many activities among the 29,000 Negro 4-H club members in his state to increase poultry products. Making home-made brooder houses for chicks and the candling and grading of eggs are important features of the 1941 program. Mr. Stone reports 134 members in one county who are planting gardens and purchasing their seed on a cooperative basis and that the county board of education in another county has set up a revolving fund to enable 4-H club girls to begin poultry projects with 50 chicks each.

R. E. Wyer, Jr., Negro county agent for Leon county, Florida, with headquarters at Tallahassee reports 23 community meetings with adults and 4-H club groups at which time the new home garden programs of the AAA was discussed. "Feeding the nation and feeding yourselves" was the slogan for these meetings.

Frank E. Pinder, Negro county agent for Alachua county, Florida, enrolls his 4-H club members in the "Home Garden National Defense club" and pledges the members "to do their part in this national defense drive by growing a year-round garden."

James M. Watlington, Negro county agent at Idabel, Okla., reports a steady increase in home grown food and feed. From 1938 to 1940 the average number of hogs for each Negro farm family in his county increased from 3.2 to 5, gardens have been doubled in size and the average number of laying hens from 18 to 30. "These increases represent our interest in national defense and through the 1941 AAA program there will be still further increases," said Mr. Watlington.

Henry Espey, Negro county agent of Crittendon county, Arkansas, reports over 3,000 Negro farmers in his county enrolled in the Plant-to-Prosper campaign promoted by a Memphis daily newspaper.

Paul O. Brooks, Negro county agent of Logan county, Oklahoma, reports greatly increased interest in beef cattle production among his 4-H club members since two of his boys won cash prizes for beef cattle exhibited at the county fair.

Texas has had two meat shows this spring: one at Palestine and the other at Houston. Nearly 2,000 pieces of meat and containers of sausage, lard and other by-products were shown at each exhibition which represented Negro farmer activities of more than 40 counties in Central and South Texas.

These examples could be multiplied many times to show how Negro farmers are cooperating in national defense by producing more and better food.

Kansas City Call
Kansas City, Mo.

Number of Negro Farmers Decreases

There were 719,071 non-white farm operators in the United States on April 1, 1940, according to figures released by Dr. Vergil D. Reed, acting director of the bureau of the census. Ninety-four and six-tenths percent of the nonwhite farm operators were in the South.

A comparison of the States according to the number of nonwhite farm operators shows that Mississippi with 159,604 ranked first, Alabama with 73,364, second, and South Carolina with 61,307, third.

Other states for which large numbers of nonwhite farm operators are reported include North Carolina 60,268, Louisiana, 59,584, Georgia, 59,132, Arkansas, 57,025, Texas, 52,753, and Virginia, 35,090.

Between 1930 and 1940 nonwhite farm operators decreased from 916,070 to 719,071, a recrease of 196,999 or 21.5 percent. Of the nine divisions, the largest proportion of decrease (32.7 percent) is shown for the West North Central states, but the percentage of decrease for those States represented only 3,634 operators. Far larger decreases in the number of nonwhite farm operators were reported for the West South Central, South Atlantic, and East South Central divisions, the decreases being 79,415, 67,473 and 54,533 respectively.

Non-White Farmers Decrease

Decreases in non-white farm operators were reported for the District of Columbia and 32 States; the decrease in Texas alone was 33,310. Other States for which large decreases were reported are Georgia, 27,657, Mississippi, 23,348, Arkansas, 22,554, and Alabama, 20,465.

Increases in nonwhite farm operators reported for 16 States ranged from one in Maine to 4,276 in Arizona, and totaled 9,214. It is interesting to note that in Massachusetts, New Jersey and West Virginia, three of the 16 States, more than 96 percent of the nonwhite farm operators reported in 1930 were Negroes.

The same report shows that in each of the remaining States for which increases are presented, very few nonwhite persons were engaged as farm operators or the proportions of Negro farm operators were small. The latter was especially true for the States of Arizona, California and New Mexico which accounted for 84.1 percent of the total increases for the 16 States.

Of the 680,266 nonwhite farm operators in the South 20.9 percent were full owners, 4.6 percent part owners and 74.5 percent tenants.

Full Owners Increase

In the States of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas West Virginia, full owners increased between 1930 and 1940.

In the District of Columbia and the States of Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Virginia, nonwhite full owners decreased, the largest decrease being 1,638 in Oklahoma.

Part owners declined from 41,523 in 1930 to 31,361 in 1940. A decrease in nonwhite part owners is shown for the District of Columbia and each Southern State.

The 506,638 nonwhite tenants reported for 1940 represent only 72.5 percent of the total number of nonwhite tenants reported at the 1930 census. Tenancy declined in each State except West Virginia for which an increase of 128 is shown. In both Kentucky and Texas, nonwhite tenants decreased more than 50 percent. During the ten years, croppers who totaled 392,897 in 1930 decreased 93,779 or 23.9 percent. However, in 1930 croppers represented 56.2 percent of all tenants but 59.0 percent in 1940.

The figures presented above are for Negroes, Indians, Chinese, Japanese and other nonwhite operators. However, a comparison of these data with the figures for Negro operators reported in the 1930 census shows that the figures for nonwhite operators are indicative of the status of Negro operators of most of the states.

The losses suffered in nonwhite farm operators, and the scarcity of jobs in cities during the depression years indicate that many Negro farm operators have been forced off the land by factors over which they could exercise little or no control.

Turn To Machinery

In an effort to decrease the cost of production, large landowners turned to machinery and more improved methods of production, and dispensed with many of their tenants, especially sharecroppers who depended on them for work stock, and to some extent food and feed. These and possibly other changes have undoubtedly been more to the disadvantage of Negro operators than to white operators, among only 1.4 percentage points, that is from 22.9 percent to 21.5 percent. During the same period the nonwhite rural-farm population decreased 4.3 percentage points or from 39.8 percent to 35.2 percent.

Afro-American
Baltimore, Maryland

Census Shows Farm Tenancy Declining

WASHINGTON

Figures recently released by the Department of Commerce Bureau of Census show that between 1930 and 1940 the number of non-white farm operators decreased from 916,070 to 719,071, a decrease of 196,999 or 21.5 per cent.

JUN 7 1941

At the same time, it was pointed out that figures for non-white operators are indicative of the status of colored operators in most of the States under surveillance. In States along the Atlantic Seaboard and most of the Southern States, colored people make up about 99.70 per cent of the non-white farm operators.

The decreases were more pronounced in the West North Central, South Atlantic and East South Central States, with increases being reported only in States where the proportion of colored farm operators is small. Tenancy declined in each State with the exception of West Virginia for which an increase of 128 tenants is shown.

Machines Replace Men

Many colored farm operators have been forced off the land by factors over which they could exercise little or no control. Large land owners turned to machinery and more improved methods of production and dispensed with many of their tenants, especially sharecroppers who depended on them for work stock, and to some extent food and feed.

These efforts to decrease the cost of production have undoubtedly been more to the disadvantage of colored operators than to white operators, among whom there is a much smaller proportion of tenancy.

Globe and Independent
Nashville, Tenn.

FARMERS AND FARMING

By Benjamin J. Davis, Editor
National Baptist Union-Review

JUN 6 1941

Farming is the backbone of the nation. Yes, the farmer is even more than that. He is expected to produce to take care of himself and family and in addition thereto, sufficient surplus to sustain all animal life in civilized countries. Every human activity, industrial or otherwise, except the church of Christ, is dependent upon what the farmer produces for existence. He produces everything that man eats, wears or drinks. There is nothing produced, whether finished or unfinished, but what he does not produce the raw material, or sustenance for the man, who finishes the job. It matters not what man's occupation may be, he cannot work unless he has something to eat and clothes to wear; and he must look to the farmer for human existence, yet he is given the least consideration by the agencies that control our social order of any other factor constituting a part of the world's economy. The farmer is the last man looked after; yet, he, next to God, is responsible for the weal or woe of the world's welfare. The man who produces nothing gets the first call, and the man who produces all, if called at all, gets that last call. And the human famiy remains unmindful of the fundamental sources of its existence.

The farmers feed the world. How long would our army last if the farmers did not grow the food that sustains their life? The best soldiers in the world are the soldiers best fed and clothed. When war comes, those who produce nothing are placed in charge of the distribution of the products of the farms while the farmer boys are handed the gun to kill and make democracy safe for the world. The man who produces the food stuffs that the world needs, is just as essential in our economy as the class, who consumes his products. The farmer is entitled to first place in our economic life instead of the last place. The Negro following the trail of the white man thinks it is a disgrace to work on the farm and hunts an easy life in the city. The Negro has the English idea; that it is a disgrace for a gentleman to work with the hands. That work on a farm was for slaves and Negroes and idleness was the dignity of a gentleman.

Booker T. Washington brought to the world a different idea of labor, to the end that all kinkds of idleness was a disgrace, and all kinds of work well done, whether with the hand or head was an honor to be coveted by all honest men and women. We add that the producer who does work well, is the important factor in the industrial, political, economical and religious welfare of the world. We call on the Negro in the South, where the most of us live, to turn the drift from the cities to the farms with the view of producing in greater quantities what the world wants and must have if it continues to exist. Man must eat and wear clothes; he must have fresh air and exercise; and the farm is the place to get these blessings from God that He has so abundantly provided man with, if he will live in the places where they are obtainable.

Let us return to the farm for the health and religion it will bring us. Let us leave the crowded cities beset with so much evil. Let the Negro farmer challenge the Government to spend some of the money it is spending in the cities to wipe out slum districts in providing farm homes for those who would like to return to the country to till the soil as God told Adam and Eve to do when they ate the forbidden fruit. The best blood and finest character our country has produced was on the farm. And the Government owes it to those who feed the rest of us every inducement consistent with good citizenship and industry, to encourage the population that crowds the cities to return to the farm where they can make a better living by tilling the soil.

Daily World
Atlanta, Georgia

Sharecroppers Warned To Get Fair Returns

JUN 6 1941

WASHINGTON, D. C.—(ANP)—In response to inquiry from sharecroppers and renters relative to their equity in 1939 and 1940 cotton loan cotton, an officials report issued here this week stated that they are entitled to their rightful share of such advances in cotton prices over the loan price as have occurred since storage of the product.

Farmers are advised to take cognizance of these advances in price, which are said to be considerable due to the demands for cotton for defense materials.

The cotton producers' contract for 1939-40 precisely states that any tenant or sharecropper having an interest in the proceeds of the cotton pledged in securiy for the loan made is to be paid his pro rata share of the proceeds of the loan and his pro rate share of any additional proceeds received from the cotton.

Charleston, S. C. News & Courier
July 8, 1941

The Answer Is Easy

"The negro farmer is a vanishing American" The Charlotte News tells its readers, citing that while the white farmers of North Carolina increased 15,173 in the last ten years the negro farmers decreased by 1,660. "Why have these negroes gone?" The News inquires, saying that "they have not died off, on the contrary there has been a great increase in the population of their race". It quotes a rural social-economist of the University of North Carolina that "What has happened in North Carolina in the last decade has occurred throughout the South and the most significant thing in Southern agriculture since the Civil War has been the decline of negro farm operators and especially negro cropper tenants".

The agricultural policy of the United States the last ten years has been to drive the negroes from the farms into the industries where their work is limited to forty or forty-two hours a week. The employing farmer's chances of receiving subsidies for crop curtailment are much greater than are those of the share-cropper or tenant.

The negro has been a laborer in the cotton fields. Before 1920 negroes had title to more than 20,000 farms in South Carolina, most of them small. Then the boll weevils infested the state and large numbers of negroes threw up their hands and surrendered.

Wages in the North were alluring at that time and in the decade, 1920—1930, the "mass migration" caused a loss of more than 70,000 negroes in South Carolina's population, the negro majority having been 46,000 in 1920 and the white majority coming to be more than 150,000 in 1930. Now the white majority is about 267,000 in a total of 1,900,000.

The federal government is driving "labor," white as well as black, from the farms. The employer who ran a five-horse farm and raised 100 bales of cotton now raises sixty with three families instead of five. He is planting more corn and oats; he is diversifying.

The outcry about discrimination against the negroes in defense and other industries is not surprising. Rightly or wrongly, white labor is preferred in most of the "industries" in the South and elsewhere. More white as well as colored wage-earning labor is offering.

The negro goes to the big town for "relief" and gets it, especially in election years.

Birmingham, Ala. News
November 24, 1941

Negroes And Farm Tenancy

In an editorial Saturday we quoted excerpts from an article on farm tenancy in the South by P. O. Davis, director of the Alabama Extension Service, appearing in the October issue of *The Nation's Agriculture*, published by the American Farm Bureau Federation. Tracing the history of farm tenancy in the South since the War Between the States, Mr. Davis said that it started largely with former Negro slaves, but that in recent years the proportion of white tenant farmers has been increasing. The total number of tenants has also been increasing steadily.

In 1920 there were 1,590,000 tenant farmers in the South, of whom a little more than half were white. In 1930 there were 1,790,000 tenants, and five-eighths were white. In 1935 the total number of tenants was 1,831,000 and nearly two-thirds were white.

"Obviously, therefore," Mr. Davis wrote, "the farm tenant problem in the South is not a racial problem."

That is true; yet the farm tenant problem does have important racial aspects. Some of the phases of the farm tenancy problem among Negroes are interestingly discussed in an article in the same magazine by T. M. Campbell, field agent of the United States Department of Agriculture at Tuskegee Institute. He writes:

When the rural Negro was suddenly thrown on his own resources by the Emancipation Proclamation without food, clothing or shelter, there became a vital need for a first-aid plan that would make self-supporting tenants out of ex-slaves. Some of them were offered a chance to farm for themselves. A few did, but most of them chose to remain and work as tenants and share-croppers with their former masters, who themselves were financially prostrate; hence our present system of farm tenancy among Negroes in the South.

The so-called "plantation system" has developed, over a long period of years, many wretched features, the majority of which can be charged to the fault of a system more than anything else. There has been much criticism of landlord and tenant, pro and con, but, so far, no plan has been brought forth to take its place. As faulty and undesirable as the system is, it must have some sustaining elements, for out of it has grown a plan whereby the Negro farmer through education and thrift is gradually finding his way to a better life.

Basically the problem of farm tenancy in the South is the concern of the entire population.

Like the good merchant, we of the South are taking inventory of our assets and liabilities. We are coming to the realization that we have an abundance of undeveloped natural resources and an abundance of undeveloped human resources. In the course of bringing about a more satisfactory adjustment of our farm tenancy situation we have an additional problem of finding a more satisfactory adjustment in Negro-white relationships.

Encouraging news from this front is that more Southern white people and Southern Negroes are sitting down together and frankly facing their problems than ever before. They are facing facts with a view to instituting remedial measures instead of blaming each other. Wherever this is done there exists a truer spirit of cooperation and goodwill; and lasting progress is being made.

Campbell says that the various federal and state agencies now at work in the rural South are having tremendous influence on the low-income group, "in that they are calling attention to many ways that tenant farmers may help themselves in subsistence, in better farming and in bigger returns." He relates that one Negro tenant voiced a widespread sentiment in saying: "There are many good features about farm tenancy. Much depends, however, upon the kind of landlord you have. What we'd like is for somebody to take some of the 'sting' out of farm tenancy."

In explaining what he meant by "sting," this Negro tenant cited three items: (1) Failure of landlord to execute a contract with his Negro tenant; (2) failure to keep promises as to the tenant's share of the crop; (3) if the landlord is not fair, the tenant will not be fair with him.

The same tenant also listed as needs, first, improved homes and sanitation; second, gardening; third, improved orchards; fourth, improved schools and roads.

Tom Campbell's article continues:

The consensus of those interviewed was that it is no disgrace to be a tenant, because this is the road that most of the present-day farm owners traveled. They all agreed that where there is fair dealing between landlord and tenant you will find amicable relations existing in every case.

There will be changes in farm tenancy in the South, but they must, necessarily, be slow. Landlords must take the lead in harmonizing the social and economic aspects of farm tenancy if lasting progress is made. As one landlord puts it: "You hear a great deal nowadays about landlord-tenant problems, but it is really the landlord's problem because the tenant cannot change his system unless the landlord lets him."

If an enduring adjustment in landlord-tenant relationship is found, it will be that existing between white landowner and Negro tenant here in the South, where the real problem exists. This is the home of 8,000,000 of the 12,000,000 Negroes in America; and any solutions that are found must be based on mutual helpfulness.

Since most of the Negro population lives in the South, and since most of the Southern Negroes live on farms, it is obvious that improvement of the positions of Negro farmers should be one of the first concerns of the South.

Rome Ga. News-Tribune
November 24, 1941

Self-Help for Better Housing

President Roosevelt was informed by the National Emergency Council in its report on housing that "houses in the rural South are the oldest, have the lowest value, and have the greatest need of repairs of any farm houses in the United States."

T. M. Campbell, field agent of the federal extension service at Tuskegee Institute, writes us that every negro extension agent in the South is conscious of the truth of this statement, since the majority of negro farm families live in the type of houses described.

He adds: "We realize that any wholesale effort to improve our rural housing situation must be predicted upon low cost, and in order to create a desire for better homes, we have begun a campaign of education among the masses the slow, hard way. While the progress made in this direction might be regarded as preliminary, we have gone far enough to prove that much can be done toward changing and improving rural housing through self-help."

That there is room for improvement in the condition of which the report speaks, there is no doubt in the minds of any who have seen the negro shacks that dot farm lands over Georgia and other Southern states, rude, primitive structures with stick'nmud chimneys that frequently catch fire; that the extension service is encouraging negroes to better their housing conditions through their own efforts is highly commendable, and in the long run will prove remarkably effective, in our opinion, as this type of encouragement breeds independence in obtaining the necessities of life, as contrasted with the idea that the Government owes one a living.

Tuskegee Institute has done a great deal toward bettering the lot of its people by teaching them how to make use of the things with which nature has endowed the earth, and in this work a great deal of inspiration can be laid to the example of Dr. George Washington Carver, humble, devoted servant of progress whose keen mind and inventive genius have benefitted all mankind.

Dr. Carver is the true scientist, a staunch believer in the Lord who attributes his wonders to divine guidance. He could have become a rich man; instead he is content with a modest living which enables him to continue his service to humanity, discovering what the lowly peanut and the sweet potato and the other products of nature can furnish besides food.

The procedure being followed under the Tuskegee plan of improving tenant houses calls for cooperation between white and negro extension forces, so they can render a distinct service in soliciting the cooperation of white landowners and negro tenants. Each job is established as a definite demonstration, and these demonstrations are on a leadership basis centered around and sponsored by the farm demonstration agents. The use of available building materials on the farm and those which can be obtained by barter or exchange is stressed.

Those who are willing to help themselves deserve help far more than those who can work but are content to sit idly by until the Government feeds them, and in encouraging this spirit the helpers will aid in demonstrating to the spongers what can be accomplished by the use of grit and determination.

The plan is one that deserves to spread over the South, and become adapted not only to negro tenants but also to white tenants, many of whose houses are in no better condition than the negro hovels the extension service seeks to improve.

The Government already has been hitting in this direction, seeking to encourage farm families to work out their own salvation with the aid of grub-stakes. The experiment at Pine Mountain Valley is a case in point, but this type of aid involves a fairly expensive building program in which the farmers are transplanted bodily to their new homes; the Farm Security Administration has been doing a wonderful work along the line of encouraging farmers to develop self-reliance, and it seems to us that this type of work, rather than the dishing out of foodstuffs through breadlines or food depots, has greater potential value in restoring the lost economic worth of many Americans who have come to look upon Government checks and Government food as their due.

The good earth will support man if he will cultivate it, rather than sit idly in the sun waiting for a handout which some day may come to an end, whereupon his morale has become so exhausted he is incapable of scratching for himself as did the pioneers who opened up this land.

Jacksonville, Fla. Times-Union
December 3, 1941

SELF-PITY WINS NO BATTLES

If the problems arising from the black and white races living under the same governments and deriving their sustenance from the same soils in the South are ever solved, the solution will come from mutual understanding and not from fault-finding on the part of either; it will be the product of co-operation, and not of incriminations or self-pity.

This has been amply proven by the successes attending the inter-racial conferences of the last quarter of a century. Through enlightened leadership representatives of the two races have exchanged ideas with courage and frankness, and formulated

plans and programs that have gone far toward alleviating the intolerable conditions that grew out of the emancipation. Progress has been made to the point that it has increased the hope for even greater strides in the future.

Both sides have faced the situation realistically, admitting their deficiencies, and recognizing the need of reforms. Had this not been so the efforts would have gone for naught. The earnest desire for betterment has been leavened with common sense that has brought the good results.

Any suggestion, therefore, that the black man is maltreated, economically or otherwise, in the South, as is made in a new book written by one who assumes the role of the Voice of the Negroes of America, comes as a discordant note in a symphony of effort which otherwise has been gaining in favor.

He pictures the Civil War as a struggle between the lords of the land and ther bosses of the buildings which failed to emancipate the black man, for "three-fourths of us who till the soil are sharecroppers and day laborers," and when it is settlement time at the plantation commissary, "we lower our eyes, shake our heads and mutter: A naught's a naught, five's a figger; all for the white man, none for the nigger."

In contrast to his picture is that offered by T. M. Campbell, field agent of the United States Department of Agriculture at Tuskegee Institute, who writes for the October issue of The Nation's Agriculture, published by the American Farm Bureau Federation:

"When the rural negro was suddenly thrown on his own resources by the Emancipation Proclamation without food, clothing or shelter, there became a vital need for a first-aid plan that would make self-supporting tenants out of ex-slaves. Some of them were offered a chance to farm for themselves. A few did, but most of them chose to remain and work as tenants and sharecroppers with their former masters, who themselves were financially prostrate; hence our present system of farm tenancy among negroes in the South.

"The so-called 'plantation system' has developed, over a long period of years, many wretched features, the majority of which can be charged to the fault of a system more than anything else. There has been much criticism of landlord and tenant, pro and con, but, so far, no plan has been brought forth to take its place. As faulty and undesirable as the system is, it must have some sustaining elements, for out of it has grown a plan whereby the negro farmer through education and thrift is gradually finding his way to a better life. * * *

"We are coming to the realization that we have an abundance of undeveloped human resources. In the course of bringing about a more satisfactory adjustment of our farm tenancy situation we have an additional problem of finding a more satisfactory adjustment of negro-white relationships.

"Encouraging news from this front is that more Southern white people and Southern negroes are sitting down together and frankly facing their problems than ever before. They are facing facts with a view to instituting remedial measures instead of blaming each other. Wherever this is done there exists a truer spirit of co-operation and goodwill; and lasting progress is being made."

A fair evaluation of the problem must take into consideration the fact that in 1920 there were 1,590,000 tenant farmers in the South, of whom a little more than half were white. In 1920 the tenants numbered 1,790,000, five-eighths of whom were white, and in 1935 they numbered 1,831,000, of whom almost two-thirds were white.

From these figures it appears that the blacks and whites have suffered alike in the post-Civil War reconstruction effort. The negroes preferred to stay with the people with whom they had lived, instead of going North to live with their emancipators, and the Southern white people have done a pretty good job of sharing their worldly goods with them.

Advertiser
Montgomery, Ala.

PROBLEMS IN AGRICULTURE

American agriculture has been hit harder than any other American business by the European war to date. Severest blows to agriculture have been to cotton and wheat and certain fruit crops produced in California. Practically all agriculture, however has suffered by reductions in market abroad; and also advancing prices of goods bought by farmers.

JAN 12 1941

To date big defense appropriations have been made to industry for the production of machines and munitions of war. These appropriations will be helpful to agriculture by increasing demands from workers for agricultural products. They have been helpful already.

But the problems of agriculture are far from solved. Instead of having an increasing demand for farm products, farmers as a whole are faced either with a declining demand or a status quo.

While this is true, farmers continue to need more cash to maintain a proper standard of living. For the farmer to maintain in 1941 the same relative standard of living that he or his father maintained a quarter of a century ago, he needs fully twice as much cash income as then.

For expansion of American business and trade leaders of the nation are now focusing their attention upon the nations south of us—Central and South America. One big radio network, for example, has announced plans for inaugurating a chain in most of the Latin American countries. This is for expansion and improvement of business.

It is encouraging. It is, in our judgment, a step in the right direction but we are reminded that the biggest trade outlet in the nations south of us is not for farm products but for the products of factories. This is true because Central and South America have developed their agriculture ahead of industry. They are, therefore, in an import position in industry and an export position in agriculture, while we are ready to export both.

For these people to trade with us, we must take goods or products in exchange for our goods and products. If a substantial portion of these imports must be agricultural products, our farmers stand to lose again. The loss in this instance probably would be greater for farmers outside of the south who produce livestock and grain products in competition with South America.

Obviously, these are trying times; and difficult days are ahead of us. All of us want to go forward. We want more business. Consequently, this nation should think and act together for a balanced economy for all groups—especially for farmers who are the foundation of economy and the seedbed of democracy.

Black Dispatch
Oklahoma City, Okla

Southern Plantations Larger And More Mechanized, With Fewer Tenants, Study Says

Tobacco and Cotton Planters Do Not Expect Improvement In Defense Program

Tenants Must Have Cash Crops

FEB 1 1941 FEB 1 1941

WASHINGTON.—(ANP)—A WPA research study released by Howard O. Hunter, acting commissioner of work projects, reports a recent increase in the size of southern plantations and a shift to wage labor at the expense of tenants.

These and other "rapid and significant changes" including mechanization, are cited to explain in part the continued widespread unemployment and underemployment, with resultant need for relief, in the rural South.

The report, "The Plantation South, 1934-1937," presents a picture of cotton and tobacco plantations which is applicable today. Corrington Gill, assistant commissioner in charge of research, statistics and finance, explained that cotton and tobacco planters do not expect the defense programs to improve their economic condition significantly.

To analyze recent changes, the WPA, division of research, resurveyed 246 plantations, with nearly 4,000 resident tenant and laborer families, which it had studied three years previously. Important changes, affecting the entire economy of the plantation South, were found to have occurred between 1934 and 1937.

Plantations increased in size by six per cent to an average of 1,014 acres, with a 14 per cent gain in cultivated area to an average of 477 acres.

Livestock also increased greatly, the number of hogs nearly doubling. There were 75 per cent more cows and 25 per cent more horses and mules.

The number of resident worker familes per 1,000 crop-acres decreased from 37 to 34, or eight per cent.

The report states that the expansion, together with an exceptionally good season, resulted in 1937 in one of the South's largest cotton crops, with landlords' cash incomes 40 per cent greater and tenants' net income 10 per cent greater than in 1934. The income of tenants and croppers in 1937, however, averaged only about $400, including goods for home consumption. It is noted that in the following year a rapid fall in cotton prices reduced employment and wages with resultant expansion of relief rolls.

Increased use of tractors was reported in most sections of the Cotton Belt, a change directly associated with the increase in the proportion of cropland and of cotton acreage operated with wage labor. Of 131 of the 246 plantations power was provided by both work stock and tractors. Nearly half of those with tractors had only one of these machines. Two plantations were entirely mechanized. Cotton, more than other major crops, was found to have resisted the general trend toward mechanization.

Subsistence advances were made by landlords to croppers and share tenants for seven months on the average in 1937 and increased to $14.50 from a monthly average of $13.70 in 1934. Interest rates on an annual bias averaged 36 per cent in 1937, or two or three times the rates paid by the planters for short-term credits.

Such heavy charges, the report says, increases the difficulties of tenants in raising their tenure status and operates against diversification of crops because the tenants must concentrate on cash crops in order to meet their obligations.

Problems arising in connection with changes in agricultural income, with increased mechanization and with variations in labor requirements are basic factors in the persistence of relief needs which far exceed the available facilities for alleviating distress, the report concludes.

Times-Picayune
New Orleans, La.

DISPLACED FARM FAMILIES MAKE UP BIG PROBLEM

C. B. Baldwin Plays 'Father' to Homeless Persons in Preparedness Drama

FEB 6 1941

By Earl F. Wegmann

Playing "father" to 10,000 farm families displaced by the national defense program is the role of C. B. Baldwin, director of the farm security administration, in this country's preparedness drama.

Mr. Baldwin, who has been director of the FSA since last July, was in New Orleans for the first time Wednesday, attending a national conference of the resettlement division's personnel, and told what he must do to care for his emergency charges.

—Photo by The Times-Picayune.
C. B. BALDWIN

The federal government, he explained, has purchased 1,000,000 acres of land for the establishment of national defense projects and this has displaced 10,000 farm families, most of whom have been ordered to "vacate" before March 1.

What must be done with these families? Relocate them, said Mr. Baldwin, which is easier to say than do. Two main problems present themselves.

Two Main Problems

"First," said Mr. Baldwin, "is that some of the national defense projects do not offer employment opportunities for the displaced farm families, the best example of which is the bombing range being constructed near Savannah, Ga.

"Second, many of the displaced farmers are leaving argiculture to enter industry, as is the case in the huge powder plant at Radford, Va., which employs 9000 persons."

So the task of the FSA, explained Mr. Baldwin, is to keep as many as possible on the farms and at the same time provide employment opportunities for those who do not care to stay.

This displacement, he said, has not been concentrated in any special area but has been scattered over the country. And contrary to the belief of many, he emphasized, it has not affected seriously the nation's agricultural program.

Why? Because the government has taken care to locate its national defense projects in sections where farm incomes are lowest.

This is being done for two reasons, said Mr. Baldwin. The first is to provide these low-income farmers with an opportunity to supplement their earnings with industrial employment and the second is the fact that while 50 per cent of those engaged in agriculture supply 89 per cent of the farm products the other 50 per cent supply only the remaining 11 per cent.

No Serious Effects

Those in the latter group are the ones being displaced by the national defense program, Mr. Baldwin said, and consequently there is little telling effect on the agricultural program.

"The thing that has to be watched closely," he said, "is the tendency of many of these low-income farmers to drift into industry because of higher wages. If this is unchecked there might be an agricultural labor shortage."

Another phase of the FSA's relation to the national defense program is its rehabilitation loan program for 800,000 families in the United States who cannot obtain adequate credit from any other federal agency to carry on their farm operations.

Mr. Baldwin said that the majority of volunteers for military service are from rural communities and that so far records show 40 per cent of them have been unable to pass the required physical examination because of poor diet.

Loan Program

The loan program, Mr. Baldwin said, emphasizes adequate food and clothing for these families and strives to make certain that each grows and cans enough food products to provide a satisfactory diet the year 'round.

"By improving the health of these families," he said, "we can make eligible members fit for military service and in this way help in the national defense program."

The FSA also has been chosen by the federal government through the national defense commission to care for the housing of workers employed on defense projects.

"This was natural," said Mr. Baldwin, "because in the past five years we have built 26,000 homes at an average cost of $1500 each. Our setup and experience qualify us for the work."

The first job the FSA was asked to do for the army was at Radford, Va. Negotiations are under way for a number of others.

Mr. Baldwin succeeds Dr. Will W. Alexander as director of the FSA. Previously he worked under Dr. Alexander as assistant director.

Daily World
Atlanta, Georgia

NOV 17 1941

Keeping Agriculture Going

Thousands of farmers, troubled and undecided about the great problems created by the war economy, are turning for aid to their marketing cooperatives.

These organizations long ago proved themselves important to farm progress. Today they are proving vital.

Problems of markets, problems of taxation, problems of ever-higher labor and material costs, problems of priorities —these are some of the grave issues the marketing co-ops must meet. They can't be solved overnight. The co-ops can't perform miracles. But they are of immense service to their members and to all agriculture.

NOV 17 1941

Southern News
Almanac
Birmingham, Ala.

Southern Farmers Will Not Gain From Defense

JAN 23 1941

WASHINGTON — The national defense progra mprobably will not improve the economic condition of the rural South, it was pointed out here this week by the Work Projects Administration.

This conclusion resulted from a WPA study, "The Plantation South, 1934-37," just made public, according to Corrington Gill, assistant WPA commissioner.

Widespread unemployment and underemployment in the South have resulted from recent increases in the size of Southern plantations, a shift from tenancy to wage labor, and farm mechanization, Gill said. The tobacco and cotton planters do not expect this situation to be offset by the national defense program, he pointed out.

"The problems of rural living in the South," Gill said, "all reflect the economic situation and emphasize the need for broad programs of economic and social reconstruction."

JAN 23 1941

According to the study, plantations increased in size by six per cent during the 1934-37 period. This was an average of 1,014 acres, and the average cultivated area per plantation increased 14 per cent to 477 acres. The number of resident worker families (tenants) per 1,000 crop-acres decreased from 37 to 34, or eight per cent.

Amsterdam News
New York, N. Y.

Tuskegee President Pleads For Aid for Cotton Farmer

BY F. D. PATTERSON
(President Tuskegee Institute)

Despite the increase in price for cotton, tenants, sharecroppers and day laborers on farms in many sections of the southeastern States are still without adequate security against suffering and privation during the coming Winter.

A new low in cotton production caused by the worst destruction by the boll weevil in a decade directly affects income. Thousands of tenants and sharecroppers have been reduced to the status of day laborers with uncertain employment which means no customary Fall "settling up." Active made members of rural families have been lured to urban centers by rumors of "jobs opening up" in defense industries only to find that, because of lack of skills they cannot qualify, thus reducing farm output of food and feed products with no compensating increase in income.

Face Cheerless Xmas

Without understanding of the economic misfortune which has overtaken their parents, children in these homes face a drab and cheerless Christmas morning. Instead of laughter to greet the emptying of gift-laden stockings hanging beside the mantel, perhaps there will be no stockings to hang and no tree underneath the market to bring warmth and kinship with other more fortunate children.

NOV 8 1941

At a time like the present, it is all the more proof of our Christian fortitude and a test of our democracy that we, in America, can share cheer with suffering children in Europe as well as with those in our own country who are innocent victims of adversity.

For many years Tuskegee Institute has been privileged to be a medium through which devoted friends in all parts of the country have sent gifts direct to such homes. Experienced members of our staff whose regular activities take them into remote rural areas visit many homes where our human reserves for national defense are greatly impaired by inadequate diets, insufficient clothing and miserable shelter. They know where the need is most acute and spent as directed.

NOV 8 1941

Packages and letters may be addressed to the writer, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama.

We, therefore, renew our appeal for donations of clothing, books, toys, candy, pictures, etc. Some friends prefer to send money with which to purchase gifts and in such instances the donation is

2-1941
Commercial Appeal
Memphis, Tennessee

Greatest Opportunity Offered Negro On Farm, Leader Says

DEC 4 1941

"Although many negroes have distinguished themselves in the arts, sciences and professions, agriculture offers the race its greatest opportunities."

This declaration, voiced with the earnestness and assurance that only years of study and experience dictate, was made yesterday by Dr. J. B. Pierce of Hampton Institute, Hampton, Va., negro field agent for the National Extension Service in nine Southern states, who came to Memphis to deliver the principal address at the fourth annual Live-At-Home Rally at Manassas High School today.

Man Of The Soil

Burley, greying, soft-voiced, a typical man of the soil, Dr. Pierce, who has been in extension work since 1906, is credited by Southern agricultural leaders, both white and negro, with doing as much, or more than any other member of his race in keeping young negroes interested in farming. He believes the negro is bound to the soil by ties as old as the Nile and Congo Rivers.

DEC 4 1941

"Any negro who can and will work can dig a good living from the soil," Dr. Pierce asserted. "The warm earth of the South yields its best under the negro's fondling touch and understanding hand. The South—Southern agriculture—offers the negro his greatest opportunity for advancement."

Dr. Pierce, who believes "the best sort of farm relief is a set of aching muscles," said what the world today needs "is less war machines and more harvesting machines."

Advocate Of "Pot Likker"

"Many folk," he insisted, "would be better fed today if pot likker could climb further up the social ladder. A farmer may never get rich, but he can eat like rich folk if he will resolve to live at home by producing his own food," he added.

"The spending side of farming is just as important as the producing side," he explained. "One way to cut farm expenses is to produce a maximum of food needs on the farm. It's silly for farm folk to complain about the high cost of living."

DEC 4 1941

Dr. Pierce, who has spent years preaching to his race against the evils of soil erosion, declared "human erosion follows in the wake of soil erosion," and said, "What we need among American farmers today is more conscientious objectors to soil depletion. 'Hay fever' to produce forage is a good ailment to have nowadays, and getting rid of 'gullied, untillable land is like pulling up weeds in a garden."

Started In 1906

Dr. Pierce was employed by the Department of Agriculture in 1906 and has been engaged in Extension Service work continuously since then. He has served as county agent, district agent, special agent covering three states and as field agent since 1918 for Arkansas, Kentucky, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia and Maryland.

DEC 4 1941

He was educated at Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee, Ala., during the administration of the late Booker T. Washington, at Hampton Institute during the administration of the late Dr. H. B. Frissell. After completing his training at these two institutions, he served on the teaching staff of Hampton Institute until he was called to the Extension Service of the Department of Agriculture.

Rural Low-Cost Housing In Alabama

NOV 29 1941

By T. M. CAMPBELL, Field Agent
Extension Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture

NOV 29 1941

(Republished from Agricultural Leaders' Digest

DURING the past fifty years Tuskegee Institute has been holding short courses for farmers, rural preachers, extension agents, 4-H Club groups, cooks, midwives, vocational teachers, CCC educational advisors, WPA nursery school teachers, and a course in weaving; but not until December, 1940 did Tuskegee, in cooperation with the Alabama Extension Service, represented by H. W. Dearing, Jr. assistant agricultural engineer and D. F. Miller, Negro assistant agricultural engineer, offer a course for rural Negro carpenters.

Mr. Campbell

Forty of these farmer-carpenters and builders came to Tuskegee—28 from Alabama, and the remainder from Florida, Georgia and South Carolina—and enrolled for a week's intensive training in blue print reading, structural foundations, framing, chimney building, interior and exterior carpentry, roofing, painting, practical estimating, and selecting materials. All present expressed their willingness to return to Tuskegee whenever a similar course is offered.

NOV 29 1941

Those farmer-carpenters from Alabama will be a valuable adjunct to the 66 Negro farm and home agents working in 33 counties in organizing local demonstration housing schools which will be followed up by the extension agricultural engineers; so that, eventually the self-help idea of home improvement will reach the remotest rural areas.

This idea of low-cost housing for Negro farmers does not mean that the Extension Services has gone into house building, but only furthering the plan of improving the standard of living for the Negro farmer through close cooperation of all local agencies and making the best use of the material at hand.

In the program for low-cost housing the representatives of the Extension Services work with the following groups; large and small landowners, independent renters, Negro tenants and white landowners, and Negro tenants and white absentee landowners or their represetatievs. The usual types of demonstrations are new construction, remodeling and indor equipment, and repairs for Negro landowners. For independent renters the following demnostrations are stressed: the staining of buildings with cheap materials; movable screens, steps; sanitary toilets and other outbuildings, repairs, etc.; movable outdoor equipment such as brooders, chciken houses and "knock down" livestock shelters.

The procedure in the matter of improving tenant houses calls for working together of white and Negro extension forces, so that they can render a distinct service in soliciting the cooperation of white landowners and Negro tenants. Each job is established as a definite demonstration. These demonstrations are on a leadership basis centered around, and sponsored by the farm and home demonstration agents. The use of available building materials on the farm and those which can be secured by barter or exchange is stressed.

NOV 29 1941

The rural housing program among Negroes is being advanced further through rural churches, schools, fraternal organizations, local banks, civic organizations, women's federated clubs, and local business concerns. Publicity is given through newspapers, radio, motion pictures, pamphlets, tours, and community discussion groups.

Specialists in agricultural engineering from the Alabama Polytechnic Institute at Auburn, render valuable assistance to the Negro agents in promoting better housing among rural Negroes in Alabama.

To Cure Farm Tenancy Evils

THE farm tenancy system in the United States is possibly the worst in civilized nations.

So declares a churchman, Bishop Muench of Fargo, North Dakota.

"The tenant," says the bishop, "has no security, because of short-term leases; he receives no compensation, except in rare instances, for any improvements he makes on soil or buildings; he is given neither incentive nor means in most cases to rise from tenancy to the ownership of an independent, well-established freehold."

DEC 29 1941

Bishop Muench lists the abuses that stand in the way of making rural America a center for family life. Commercialized farming is destructive of family culture, he asserts. "The making of profits rather than the making of a living becomes the first concern of commercialized farming. Family life cannot prosper under such conditions. Neither can democracy, for a system of servile farming is destructive of basic rights and freedoms."

Not all farm tenants themselves are paragons of industry and thrift and geniuses as managers, and some of them would continue in the sad state of most of them today, no matter what was done for them.

When placed on land of their own and properly assisted in direction of their farms by expert government agents, most former farm tenants have made good as farmers in their own right.

DEC 29 1941

It has been demonstrated as far as anyone needs to go by the farm security administration that the most practical and effective solution of the problem of farm tenancy is placing of tenants on farms of their own with loans furnished by the administration.

This program has been under way only a short time, and a limited number of tenants have thus been

It is doubtful if much can be done for the farm tenant as long as he is a tenant. The cure of the evils of farm tenancy is to make a farm owner of the tenant. In Texas there is plenty of good land for carrying out this plan.

What Are We Going To Do Now!

NOV 28 1941

It is very difficult in these trying times, to say that this or that, is the best thing, to do. These are difficult times, in which we live. Our tomorrows are going to be even more trying. I speak of the Negro people particularly, and I speak of all people generally.

As a race we face a **dark** future. I would be untrue to ourselves, unless I reminded **all of us**, of that cold fact. When a man finds that he is sick, his next best step, is to go tell his doctor **everything.** In the case of an individual faced with stiff economic and social problems—the best thing to do is to tell **himself,** and those of his fellowmen **everything,** and upon that basis try to work out a remedy, with all who are actually or constructively concerned.

In the South the majority of Negroes still live on farms. According to Dr. Patterson and Mr. Tom Campbell, thousands and thousands of these farmers are catching hell and their future is no less dark. What affects the Negro farm owners or the tenant farmer affects all Negroes, everywhere. If they can't make ends meet, they will not be able to pay their tax, mortgages, debts, support their churches, get proper medical service, to say nothing of enjoying the better things of life and that means, Negroes in urban centers will have less and less to depend upon from that source.

In the urban centers—like Birmingham for instance, let's look at an industrial worker. Let's suppose he is a coal miner. There are some fourteen thousand Negro miners in this district. Here is what the black coal miner faces—the possibility of the mines being mechanized, with three thousand men with machines doing the work that twenty thousand now do. Negroes do not operate machines in the ore and coal mines on a big scale, and when push comes to shove—the advent of the machine-mining age—who do you think will operate those machines—blacks or whites? I don't think I need answer that question. In some sections of the country—(we have even heard of cases here in the Birmingham district)—white men belonging to the same union with black men, conspire to keep Negroes from getting a chance to operate machines. Up in Detroit a number of white men went on a strike, because one Negro who had been a member of a union with them for years, had been placed on a machine next to them. Out in Pennsylvania,

Age-Herald 2-1941
Birmingham, Ala.

Farms For Tenants

Encountering the agricultural census figures which show a decline of 40,000 in the number of Alabama tenant farmers between 1935 and 1940, many people have rejoiced in this apparent evidence that our most deep-seated social malady was responding to treatment. At this rate, it would seem, the landless will no longer be with us in twenty years' time.

The same 1940 census, however, shows about 1,500 *fewer* owners than did the census of 1935. Where, then, did the 40,000 tenant farmers disappear to? The answer is, some got off the overburdened land entirely and found jobs in industry. This may be accounted a social gain, although the evidence indicates that the displaced tenants who have been thus productively re-absorbed in the total economy are a minority, probably a small minority.

Many others crowded into the towns and got on relief, or tried to get on relief, meanwhile swelling the numbers of the casual, unskilled laborers. The majority have remained on the land, where, as wage hands employed on seasonal tasks such as cotton-chopping and picking, they have lost the marginal security they formerly possessed in the lowly status of "tenant" or "cropper" which entitled them to be listed as "farm operators" by the census.

A far greater number of tenants would have been "out of the picture" in 1940 had it not been for the rehabilitation program of the Farm Security Administration which through the previous five-year period kept tens of thousands of tenants making a living when all other sources of credit were barred to them.

We still have an enormous number of tenants in Alabama—136,000 families or about 700,000 people—and an enormous proportion—58.8 per cent—of our farms are tenant-operated. In the plantation sections, of course, the proportion is far higher, running up to 75 and even 80 per cent tenancy in certain counties. Such a situation, wherever it has come to exist in relatively modern times, has been an unquestioned sign of social disequilibrium and of potential social danger. Wise governments, as in Denmark, Ireland and Finland, have not ignored it, knowing that to ignore it was to tolerate a menace to the state and to the whole social order.

* * *

For too long a time the government of the United States ignored the spreading cancer of farm tenancy, and the fact that no serious social disorders developed is due primarily to the fact that our industrial system at the same time was developing with such rapidity that the more ambitious tenants and their children could escape from hopelessness on the land to jobs in the cities. When this safety valve was tied down during the depression, rural discontent gathered force in the sections where tenancy was most general and the New Deal administration undertook measures of temporary and partial reform such as the rehabilitation program which has been mentioned.

This program, nevertheless, is something of a misnomer. Rehabilitation would seem to imply a thorough and lasting reestablishment of a family's security. The American tenant will not be fully "rehabilitated" until he has title to the land he tills—whether as an independent operator or as a member of a producers' cooperative.

Such an objective, of course, cannot be attained in a short period of time. The gradual process of education and experiment, which the liquidation of tenancy will require could hardly be accomplished even in a generation. We have nevertheless embarked on the course which leads to that objective under the Bankhead-Jones act which empowers the government to buy farms and to resell them to able tenants on a long-term basis.

The operations of this law, administered by the FSA have hardly as yet been statistically perceptible, but each year the appropriations to finance the program are gradually increased, and meanwhile the FSA is securing the necessary experience in choice of people and land, in techniques of low-cost building, in farm management and in methods of supervision and education which must be the essential prerequisite to the broad-scale, all-out attack upon tenancy which the future most certainly holds.

For next year, the FSA will spend $50,000,000 on the farm tenant purchase program over the entire country—or about the cost of the Huntsville arsenal. Of this amount, Alabama will receive more than $3,000,000, only the three states of Texas, Mississippi and Georgia receiving larger allotments. The amount to be spent in Alabama should suffice to give about 560 tenant farmers the chance of buying a good farm with a good house and barn on it. For this we are grateful, but let us not forget that there will remain some 135,500 tenant farmers in Alabama.

Pittsburgh Courier
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Sharecroppers Warned To Get Cotton Shares

WASHINGTON, July 31—(ANP)—In response to inquiry from sharecroppers and renters relative to their equity in 1939 and 1940 cotton, loan cotton, an official report issued here this week stated that they are entitled to their rightful share of such advances in cotton prices over the loan price as have occurred since storage of the product. Farmers are advised to take cognizance of these advances in price, which are said to be conisderable due to the demand for cottton for defense materials.

The cotton producers' contract for 1939-1940 precisely states that any tenant or sharecroppers having an interest in the proceeds of the cotton pledged in security for the loan made is to be paid his pro rata share of the proceeds of the loan and his pro rate share of any additional proceeds received from the cotton.

Advertiser
Montgomery, Ala.

Advancement On Plantation Farming Seen

Sharecropping Remains As Economic Evil To Tenants

Outwardly the old plantations that flourished for 150 years from Virginia to Texas have changed. The general characteristics, however, have remained the same. There is still large scale ownership of the land and of the tools of production. Plentiful and cheap labor forces continue with white farm tenant and laborer families in the Southeast now exceeding Negro families similarly employed. Sharecropping keeps alive many of the evils of the old plantation economy.

These are some of the highlights of "The Plantation South Today," a pamphlet just issued by the division of research of the WPA. Written by T. J. Woofter Jr., and A. E. Fisher, this publication is the fifth in a series designed to present simple, factual information on social problems of general interest. "The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy," by Dr. Charles E. Johnson, of Fisk University, with Drs. Edwin R. Embree and W. W. Alexander, is listed among 11 other books making up the bibliography of "The Plantation South Today."

"In true plantation areas land ownership is highly concentrated," the pamphlet says, "and the proportion of tenants among farm operators is high. Incomes in such areas are greater per capita than in other Southern agricultural counties, but lower than in other farming sections of the nations. There are comparatively few urban and village dwellers and few non-agricultural industries. Families are large but schools are relatively small and poor, especially for Negroes. Health services are markedly deficient. Living standards are near the minimum level."

Problems of relief and rehabilitation have seriously effected the rural South, particularly in the cotton belts. Large families among tenants have been considered advantageous by the plantation landlords chiefly because the younger members constitute a cheap labor supply. During the 1920-30 decade about 250,000 persons composing the excess labor supply migrated each year to regions where the industrial demand was expanding. After 1930 the industrial labor market began to shrink. Migration was reduced. Meanwhile, the size of plantations dwindled. This situation restricted the demand for labor and intensified the problems of relief and rehabilitation, the latest WPA pamphlet explains.

The various types of landlord-tenant arrangements which are often confused in the public's mind are made clear in "The Plantation South Today." Renters who rent land outright from the owners are the least dependent of the plantation workers. They receive all the proceeds of their crops with the exception of a fixed rent paid in cash or crops. Next in order of dependence are the share tenants. These workers own their work stock and tools. They must usually be provided with food, fertilizer and a house by the owner of the plantation. Share tenants cultivate a fixed size of land and receive in return a share of the crop, usually more than one-half.

"Still more dependent are the sharecroppers, who furnish the landlord nothing but their labor and must be provided with stock, tools, fertilizer, food and a house.

"They receive half their crop in return for working a tract of about 20 crop acres, but all advances made to them for half of the operating expenses, food and other necessities are deducted, with interest, from their portion by the operator when the crop is sold. There are more of these sharecroppers than any other type of plantation labor. None of them have a legal claim on any improvements they make to the land or the buildings, and so they have little desire to conserve or improve them. What they do is drift from place to place, looking for better conditions somewhere else but usually finding that they are much the same or worse. At the bottom of the agricultural ladder are the wage hands, who are hired for a fixed wage and the casual laborers who are hired at peak seasons by the day.

"Even when croppers and tenants clear anything on the year's farming, they usually exhaust their resources within a few months and are destitute again at the beginning of the crop year. The landlord has to advance them credit to finance the new crop and to prvide for their living expenses until the crop is sold. The average tenant in 1937 was advanced $85 for his share of crop expenses and $104 to live on while the crop was maturing. Thus the average tenant borrowed around $200," the study continues.

"The Plantation South Today" suggests the adaptation of housing programs for low-income groups to Southern rural conditions. Specific gains made since 1934 with the assistance of the Soil Conservation Service and the FSA of the Department of Agriculture are also cited.

Afro-American
Baltimore, Maryland

THE FARMERS ARE COMING

Starting home the other day we met a farmer outside of the AFRO office.

"What are you doing in the city?" we asked.

"Making $5 a day in defense work, and I go home for a little farm work Saturday and Sunday."

* * * *

Maryland's colored farm operators dropped 23 per cent in the last ten years. In 1930 there were 5,267 colored operators of farms. Today there are only 4,051.

This means that there are 1,216 fewer colored farms than ten years ago. Half of these farms were owned by colored people who sold out and moved to the city.

These figures are for the years 1930-40, and therefore, before high defense wages began to attract rural workers.

* * * *

We have noted the steady decrease in colored farmers for the past three decades and mourned over it. Sometimes we wonder whether it should give us concern at all.

Six and a half million colored people live in rural areas. That is over half of the colored U.S. population.

As a racial group we are only 10 per cent of the whole U.S. population, but we operate 14 per cent of the nation's farms.

Like other groups, colored farmers want more money, shorter hours, better schools and homes and more time for recreation.

So they quit the farm for the city and industry.

* * * *

We should naturally like to see the farm workers make this change and the farm owners keep their holdings, but that isn't the way it works.

The man who is enterprising enough to buy a farm is the one who realizes most quickly that the city offers larger opportunities.

What's happening, therefore, is a migration which will continue to whittle on that 14 per cent mentioned above until it gets down to normal size.

If we are only 10 per cent of the population, we should be satisfied to operate 10 per cent of the farms.

During World War I one million Southerners left their farms to find homes in the North. If we take two or three years to beat the Germans this time, we can expect a similar movement of farm workers.

Far from being sad about the whole situation, we should be secretly glad that these people are finding a way to better their condition, and give them every assistance possible.

Daily World
Atlanta, Georgia

Farm Tenancy Among Negroes

BY T. M. CAMPBELL

Field Agent, U. S. D. A., Tuskegee Institute, Alabama

When the rural Negro was suddenly thrown on his own resources by the Emancipation Proclamation without food, clothing or shelter, there became a vital need for a first-aid plan that would make self-supporting tenants out of ex-slaves. Some of them were offered a chance to farm for themselves. A few did, but most of them chose to remain and work as tenants and sharecroppers with their former masters, who themselves were financially prostrate; hence, our present system of farm tenancy among Negroes in the South.

The so-called "Plantation System" has developed, over a long period of years, many wretched features, the majority of which can be charged to the fault of a system more than anything else. There has been much criticism of landlord and tenant, pro and con, but, so far, no plan has been brought forth to take its place. As faulty and undesirable as the system is, it must have sustaining elements, for out of it has grown a plan whereby the Negro farmer through education and thrift is gradually finding his way to a better life.

Basically the problem of farm tenancy in the South is the concern of the entire population.

Like the good merchant, we, of the South, are taking inventory of our assets and liabilities. We are coming to the realization that we have an abundance of undeveloped human resources. In the course of bringing about a more satisfactory adjustment of our farm tenancy situation we have an additional problem of finding more satisfactory adjustment in Negro-white relationships.

Encouraging news from this front is that more Southern white people and Southern Negroes are sitting down together facing their problems than ever before. They are facing facts with a view to instituting remedial measures instead of blaming each other. Wherever this is done there exists a truer spirit of cooperation and goodwill; and lasting progress is being made.

AIDING GROUP

The various Federal and State agencies now at work in the rural South are having tremendous influence on the low income group, in that they are calling attention to many ways that tenant farmers may help themselves in subsistence, in better farming and in bigger returns. One Negro tenant voiced the sentiment that is pretty widespread when he said: "There are many good features about farm tenancy. Much depends, however, upon the kind of landlord you have. What we'd like is for somebody to take some of the 'sting' out of farm tenancy."

Pressed for an explanation of "sting" he said: (1) failure of landlord to execute a contract with his Negro tenant; (2) failure to keep promises as to the tenant's share of the crop; (3) if the land lord is not fair, the tenant will not be fair with him."

Speaking of some good features needed this tenant lists, first, improved homes and sanitation. second, gardening; third, improved orchards; fourth, improved schools and roads.

NO DISGRACE

The consensus of those interviewed was that it is no disgrace to be a tenant because this is the road that most of the present-day-farm owners traveled. They all agree that where there is fair dealing between landlord and tenant you will find amicable relations existing in every case.

There will be changes in farm tenancy in the South but they must, necessarily, be slow. Landlords must take the lead in harmonizing the social and economic aspects of farm tenancy if lasting progress is made. As one landlord puts it: "You hear a great deal nowadays about landlord - tenant problems, but it is really the landlord's problem because the tenant cannot change his system unless the landlord lets him."

If an enduring adjustment in landlord-tenant relationship is found it will be that existing between white landowner and Negro tenant here in the South, where the real problem exists. This is the home of eight million of the twelve million Negroes in America, and any solutions that are found must be based on mutual helpfulness.

We, as Extension agents, more and more, realize that one of our major problems is to begin at the bottom of the agricultural ladder and work upward with Negro farm tenants in order to enable them to climb one rung at a time until they reach the stage of self-sufficiency where they can own their homes and farms. They are entitled to a fair opportunity to rise by their own merits.

Advertiser
ontgomery, Ala.

Tenancy On Southern Farms

By P. O. DAVIS,
Director, Alabama Extension Service.

Farm tenancy is a subject of much discussion in recent years, throughout the United States, especially in the South. Most writers and speakers view it with alarm" as though it were a sin or a crime. They talk and write about it this way; and, consequently, the public is more sensitive and more disturbed about it than heretofore.

Farm tenancy, however, is not confined to the United States or to any portion of it. In Iowa, for example, more than half of the farmers are tenants; in England and Australia more than three-fourths. Every nation has it.

That ownership of farm land by those who operate it is important, no intelligent person can deny. However, tenancy is not a sin nor a crime. It is a product of an unsound economy plus individual deficiencies. Some of it traces back most of a century. In the South tenancy had its big beginning in the Civil War. Before this war there were very few tenants in the South. People on farms then were either owners without slaves, owners with slaves, or slaves. Since the Civil War Southern population has divided itself into individual owner-operators, landlords, tenants, sharecroppers, and farm laborers.

Before the Civil War Southern planters had all three of the major factors of agricultural production — land, labor and capital. After the Civil War they were without capital and their labor was upset and disconnected. Ex-slaves had neither land nor capital. Landlords had land without capital.

Slaves had been freed. They were left to manage for themselves. Landlords needed their services, but they were unable to offer them cash as wages. Instead they offered a portion of crops. Hence they became sharecroppers. This was commodity payment instead of dollar payment.

To borrow money from "up North" at a high rate of interest landlords had to produce a crop that would sell for cash, this crop generally being cotton, plus tobacco in some localities and, in small areas, truck crops. Under conditions then existing share cropping was about all that could be done. Ex-slaves needed work and landlords wanted to operate their farms. They had to operate on a new relation of owner to labor and of labor to land. This was a new form of tenancy.

Later, as urban opportunities became available and returns from farming were low, much of the managerial ability on farms left for other employment — other opportunities. This accelerated farm tenancy which has grow in the South ever since the Civil War, except for brief periods. Starting largely with ex-Negro slaves Southern farm tenancy has changed color in recent years.

In 1920 a little more than half of the 1,590,000 tenant farmers in the South were white. In 1930 there were 1,790,000 tenant farmers in the South and five-eighths were white; in 1935 the total had increased to 1,831,000 and nearly two-thirds were white. Obviously, therefore, the farm tenant problem in the South is not a racial problem.

Most farm tenants—black and white—are not tenants by choice but by economic necessity. They are products of rather than the cause of economic forces. The condition of agriculture for a long time has not been such as to enable most people on farms to own farms.

I am confronted frequently with the suggestion that tenancy is due largely to abuses by landlords, or that most landlords are tyrant or devils in dealing with their tenants. The assumption seems to be that landlords are prosperous while tenants are poor. The real truth is that most of these farms are mortgaged by landlords and very few of them have been able to make improvements because of inadequate income. In Alabama, for example, 90 per cent of the farm buildings need painting. A big majority of them are inadequately furnished. Bathrooms are entirely too few.

Likewise, the plight of tenants has been tragic — and still is. Most of them are not good managers and have had no one to give them efficient management which is essential to success in farming as in other business.

To improve the economic status of all people on farms of the South I offer the following suggestions:

1. That prices of farm production be maintained high enough for good farming to be profitable so that landlords, tenants, and sharecroppers will have a decent income in cash. All of them should prosper together. Owners should be able to liquidate debts and tenants and croppers who want to be owners and who are capable of efficient self-management should be able to become owners.

2. That mutual problems between landlords and tenants be approached and solved with a view to being fairly and mutually helpful. Those not capable of efficient self-management need management for their own welfare.

3. That landlords and tenants be members of and work together in one farm organization for the good of all. In industry employers and employes usually are in distnct groups. Farmers are both laborers and capitalists. Therefore, owners, tenants, and croppers should be members of and work together in the same farm organization because the welfare of all is mutual.

While farm ownership is desirable and highly recommended, tenancy is not wholly bad. There are tenants who prefer to use their money for operations rather than invest it in land. The same is true of business concerns. A big chain grocery store, for example, owns very little real estate. Instead they rent. Their money is in groceries and operations rather than in land and buildings. In Manhattan, New York City, 97 per cent of the people live in rented homes.

Ownership, of course, is desirable but it is not a reality for a big majority of people.

In agriculture I look forward to the day when all farm people will either be owners and operators of their own farms or will live and work on farms where there is the best of mutual understandings, high efficiency, and satisfactory returns in both money and n products produced for home consumption so that all people on each farm will be happy and enjoy a high standard of living plus security.—The Nation's Agriculture.

Advertiser
Montgomery, Ala.

FARM TENANCY

There are almost as many suggestions as to how to approach the problem of farm tenancy in the South as there are people who have been interested in the subject, including not a few people who don't look upon it as a problem at all and hence suggest that nothing be done about it. But the continued interest in the subjest does indicate a widespread feeling that the problem requires continuing attention.

P. O. Davis, director of the Extension Service, of A. P. I., presents some interesting ideas on the subject in an article reprinted on this page today.

Certainly, as Mr. Davis indicates, tenancy is not a system saddled upon the South by its own design. It developed out of certain economic conditions, and has continued unabated.

There is a school of thought which assumes that the ills of tenancy are due to abuses of landlords. Mr. Davis aptly observes:

"I am confronted frequently with the suggestion that tenancy is due largely to abuses by landlords, or that most landlords are tyrant or devils in dealing with their tenants. The assumption seems to be that landlords are prosperous while tenants are poor. The real truth is that most of these farms are mortgaged by landlords and very few of them have been able to have improvements because of inadequate income. In Alabama, for example, 90 per cent of the farm buildings need painting. A big majority of them are inadequately furnished. Bathrooms are entirely too few."

There is another school of thought which just as wrongly assumes that all of the ills of tenancy are due to "laziness and shiftlessness." Under this theory the vast tenant population of the South has a monopoly on shiftlessness and laziness while farmers in other sections and city people everywhere are not afflicted with the malady.

Laziness and shiftlessness, like tenancy itself, are symytoms, not causes, of more fundamental problems. They are products of deadened incentive, the hopelessness of a cotton economy which has been gradually going to pot, the tragedy of wasted soil, the greater tragedy of people wasted by disease, by malnutrition and by insufficient education.

Mr. Davis offers three suggestions for improving the situation. The first, which has to do with increased income, may help, but it will not solve the problem by any means. Tenancy has been increasing, year in and year out, in times of high agricultural prices as well as in times of low.

Certainly, as he suggests, there are many remedies which should be applied through mutual effort on the part of both landlords and tenants. For instance, the constant movement of the tenant population — more than a third of Alabama farm renters move every year—injures both parties. The cooperation of both parties is necessary if there is to be security of tenure and a more stable relationship on the land. Modern methods and modern farm programs — including soil conservation, livestock, dairying, poultry, and all that go with them—do not lend themselves to the annual agreement which was adapted to cotton. These things require long-term relationships, with protection for both parties.

The extent to which Mr. Davis's third suggestion — organization — would help would depend in large measure upon how the organization functioned. If it was able to recognize that while tenants and landlords have mutual interests, each party also has particular interests, then it could work to harmonize those interests. This would mean being interested jointly in higher prices for cotton, for instance, and at the same time recognizing that higher cotton prices would also mean higher prices for picking.

It should not be forgotten that the worst evils of tenancy are found where tenants and landlords never see each other except, perhaps, for a few hours each year at rent

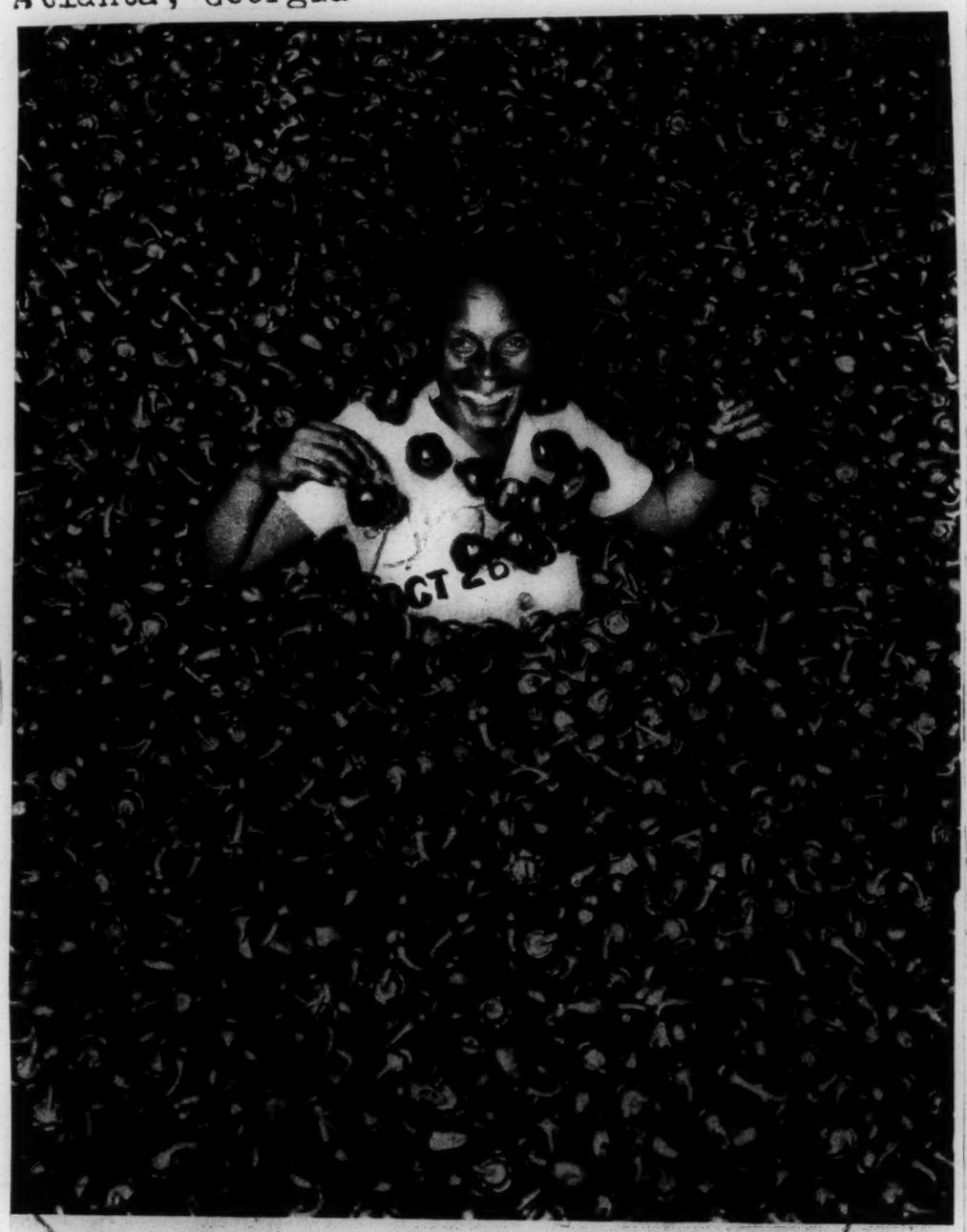
collecting time. They are found where there have been failures of farm management on the part of those who own land. Where land-owners manage their property from day to day in keeping with sound agricultural practices, the system is far better than on property which is not managed at all.

Finally, there may be some question as to whether the fact that 97 per cent of the people of New York are renters either proves or disproves anything about farming. Farming is a way of life. An attachment for and to the land can offset some of the gadgets, such as white ways, gaudy automobiles, night clubs, world fairs, and subways with which the people of cities attempt to make up the difference between existing and living. Life in New York is not a pattern to be used as a guide, but to avoid.

In less than 40 years the people of Denmark found ways to reduce tenancy from 80 per cent down to 15 per cent, and at the same time to achieve a measure of economic democracy which was the envy of the world before brutal and powerful forces wrecked it. What the people of Denmark did the people of Alabama are capable of doing.

OCT 24 1941

Constitution
Atlanta, Georgia



Snowed under by tons of pimientos, this grinning pepper corer poses for a parody on the old theme that every product must have its "queen."

Advertiser
Montgomery, Ala.

OCT 31 1941

TENANCY AND THRIFT

Editor, The Advertiser:

As I have been a small land owner for many years and have been in touch with agricultural problems in this section during that time, I have read with considerable interest the letters and editorials appearing in The Advertiser recently on the subject of farm tenancy in the South.

By far the most interesting and sensible article in my opinion, that you have published is that written by Mr. P. O. Davis, taken from "The Nation's Agriculture," and published in your issue of last Friday. I am glad that Mr. Davis brought out so strongly the point that tenancy is neither a sin nor a crime. As he says, most writers on the subject, and I would add most would-be reformers, seem to look on it as such and "view it with alarm." The fact is that there is no intrinsic wrong in one man renting land from another for farming purposes any more than there is in one man renting a home or a store from another. It can be and usually is a good business arrangement. Certainly there is no good reason why it should not be. We do not take issue, however, with anybody on the idea that it would be much better for the country as a whole and for each individual if all tenants could become land owners and work their own land.

So, admitting for the sake of argument that farm tenancy is a bad thing, let us ask ourselves the question "why is a tenant a tenant?" If we can find the correct answer to this question, based on truth and the facts, then it will be much easier for us to correct the evil.

To begin with, let me give you a true story from life. About thirty years ago three tenants came to me and said they wanted to buy from me a tract of land containing 145 acres. These tenants were Negroes (I have never had any other kind, and have always gotten along well with them) and all were about in middle life at the time. I agreed to sell the land and they divided it among themselves, each taking a deed to his part. My best recollection is that not one of these men was more than seven or eight years paying for the land in full. Only one of the trio is still living at this time and he is now about 75 years old. I have a lot of respect for this old man and often point to him as a good example for others. Since his first purchase of land he has bought several other tracts from me and from others and to my certain knowledge now owns not less than 300 acres of land and all of it is paid for.

Now, let us think for a little while of another man who was also a tenant with me about the same time the above mentioned purchased his first land. This second man was of a different type and there are dozens, perhaps hundreds of this type, where there is one of the first type. As far as I know this tenant never had any thought of buying land, nor of saving up money for anything. Whenever he made a good crop and had money he would spend the money promptly for any and everything he wanted and would always be ready to "make another draw" at the beginning of the following year. It is needless to say that this man is still a tenant, always will be and from all appearances his children are following in his footsteps, and will doubtless help carry on the "evils of tenancy."

Now, Mr. Editor, let's get right down to the point and see from the above illustrations what the main cause of tenancy is. Why did our first tenant above get out of the tenant class, while the second is still helping to carry on farm tenancy? The truth is as plain as can be. The first man was willing to forego the spending of his money as fast as he made it, and saved his money in order to buy some land; the second was absolutely unwilling to save for anything at all. It is a matter of thrift, Mr. Editor. This is at the very heart of the problem of tenancy. I do not claim any credit whatever for getting the first man out of the tenant class, neither do I take any of the blame that the second is still a tenant.

And so Mr. Editor, may I respectfully suggest that all those belonging to the school of thought whom you say assume that the evils of tenancy are in some way due to the abuses of landlords, all these would-be reformers, let them get busy, if they are really anxious to do some good, and teach the tenant class the good old virtue of thrift. There may be other virtues, such as honesty, fair dealing, hard work, etc., that need to be taught also, but the real heart of the matter is to teach them to save, to lay up something with which to buy a home and a piece of land. This is the most sensible and practicable way I can see to fight the "evils of tenancy."

H. S. CALDWELL.
Union Springs.

OCT 31 1941

Journal and Guide
Norfolk, Virginia

Status of Negro Farmer Affects Nation

MORE and more attention is being focused, through government rehabilitation and farm aid programs, on the Negro farmer. The status of this group is one of the major factors in the nation's agricultural situation.

FEB 15 1941

From the beginning of American history, this group has borne a proportionately large share of the task of building American civilization. Laboring in the tobacco and cotton fields, the Negro farmer contributed billions of dollars to the national wealth.

Today, in the South alone, there are 4,500,000 Negroes living on farms. Ninety-five percent of all the farmers of the race live in the South. Nearly half of all the southern sharecroppers are Negroes.

The economic welfare of this large segment of the population is closely tied up with the welfare of agriculture in the South. The problems of soil erosion, of market failures, of blighter crops all affect the welfare of the Negro farmer as well as the white, and in turn, affects the whole southern economic picture.

Government rehabilitation programs developed during the Roosevelt administration have sought to alleviate the suffering and need of Negro and white farmers. Experiment stations, county farm agents, conservation programs, homestead projects, and other aspects of farm relief, have been a boon to the southern farmer.

A recent report published by the United States Department of Agriculture, entitled "The Negro in American Agriculture," points out that 50,000 rehabilitation loans were made to Negro farmers in the four years, that 1,800 Negro farmers were living on farm homestead projects, and that 500 Negro county agents were serving farmers in the field.

Although the government program has been commendable and far-reaching, there is yet more to be done. The plight of the sharecropper is still serious. The average net worth of the Negro farmer (a survey in 1939 among 50,000 families placed it at $752) is still too low.

If the government program is increased and extended until the total welfare of farmers, sharecroppers, and tenant farmers is improved, the economic future of the race and of the country will be brighter.

Telegraph
Macon, Georgia

New Uses for Cotton

FEB 11 1941

An inventive genius which can make dress fabrics out of glass ought to be able to do wonders with cotton, and unless we do something like that the cotton planters of the South are sunk.

It is all very well to get worked up to fortissimo pitch about shooting the Nazis into Kingdom Come, but it is equally important to save ourselves from the economic blitzkrieg which has already devastated the cotton industry.

Claudius T. Murchison, president of the Cotton Textile Institute, has gone to New York where a meeting will be held next Friday to try to increase the consumption of cotton.

He talks sense when he says this is our only redemption.

The Department of Agriculture has decided to carry over 12.5 million bales of cotton. This is the equivalent of an average year's yield.

We used to export 5 million bales, but we will do well if we sell a million bales abroad this year.

* * *

The agricultural department itself has reached the conclusion that we have carried reduction of acreage far enough. We cannot go on throwing farmer and farm hands out of work and cutting down the number employed in textile mills. As Mr. Murchison says, we are merely placing that many more poor devils on relief.

The drift is away from the farm, at best, and our one hope is to create additional employment in Southern industry.

So the logic of events is to create new uses for cotton.

Mr. Murchison advocates an extensive advertising campaign, but we must also increase the sales appeal of cotton fabrics with new ideas in design, better colors and freedom from shrinkage.

The federal government can help by using more cotton in various ways and for the moment Mr. Murchison is calling attention to the plan for distributing 25 million dollars in stamps, like the food stamps, to stimulate the demand for cotton goods.

FEB 11 1941

* * *

The suggestion is that a farmer will be given 10 cents in stamps for each pound of cotton he agrees not to produce, as compared with a certain base average.

He would have to spend this 10 cents for the purchase of cotton goods. Bed sheets and window curtains of cotton would be bought and used by families which have never been accustomed to them, but when they became used to them the demand would continue.

This is but one phase of the general movement to increase the demand for cotton and thus create new jobs instead of turning these people over to relief.

There are literally thousands of new uses for cotton and the meeting in New York this week should be followed with the keenest interest by everyone who is concerned about the real welfare of the South.

Daily World
Atlanta, Georgia

Guard Farm Independence

APR 18 1941

Addressing the Northeastern Dairy Conference, Dr. H. C. Byrd, president of the University of Virginia, warned leaders of marketing cooperatives and other farm organizations of the dangers of too much agricultural regulation by government.

"I do not think the government should be used to unify farm efforts in any direction," said Dr. Byrd, "if such unification can be achieved through farmers' own voluntary efforts."

Excessive government regulation has made rubber stamps of the owners and managers of many industries. The same thing can happen to the farmer if he looks to Washington and the state capitals every time some problem presents itself. Political power tends always to increase, never to lessen.

APR 18 1941

Farmers, through such organizations as the marketing cooperatives, can solve most of their problems for themselves. Government should be called in only as a last resort. Otherwise, our much vaunted farm independence will gradually vanish.

Washington Post
Washington, D. C.

Farm Youth Still Flocking To Cities, Census Data Show

JAN 20 1941

By the Associated Press

The depression slowed up America's gain in urban population, but failed to reverse the historic trend from farm to city.

Actually, the Census Bureau said yesterday, the percentage of population living in urban territory increased from 56.2 in 1930 to 56.5 in 1940.

In the decade, the total population increase for the 48 States and District of Columbia was 8,894,229. Of this number, 5,468,879 were urban and 3,425,350 rural residents.

But bureau statisticians said the most significant facts were that while in the 1920-30 decade urban population increased six time as fast as rural citizenry, in the 1930-40 decade the urban gain of 7.9 per cent barely topped the rural increase of 6.4 per cent.

"The marked decline in the rate of growth," they said, "is attributable in large measure to the economic conditions of the past decade."

The slowing up was attributed to a smaller farm-to-city movement, a decline in the urban birth rate, and the virtual stoppage of immigration.

Rural population made its best showing not in the predominately rural Middle West and South, but in the East and Far West. In the Middle West, for instance, rural population declined in "dust bowl" States where distressed farmers either moved to the city or to other States.

In New York during the decade the urban population declined from 83.6 to 82.8 per cent, while in South Dakota the "city folks" increased from 18.9 to 24.6 per cent.

In 1940, Maryland's urban population was 1,080,351; in 1930, 974,869. Her rural population was 740,893 in 1940, and 656,657 in 1930.

The figures for Virginia: Urban, 944,675 in 1940, 785,537 in 1930; rural, 1,733,098 in 1940, 1,636,314 in 1930.

Constitution
Atlanta, Georgia

COLORED MINISTER OFFERS GOOD ADVICE

Editor Constitution: A word of advice to the colored people, my race, the Negroes of the south:

Through the plans of God and our government, the colored people have the greatest opportunity presented to them now on the farms that has ever been presented to them, and I want to advise them to grasp this golden opportunity before it is too late.

Go back to the farm where you can raise and have plenty of fresh good food to eat and live happy; where you can get your houses free, gardens and water free, where you can raise good children and serve God.

Sin, vice and laziness are destroying the Negro race everywhere. The chaingang and penitentiaries are crowded with them.

Jobs are scarce in small cities. Farm production is much needed, and prices are good in war time. The government Farm Housing Project offers you anything you want. Will sell you a home, rent you a farm, let you have money, stock and give you 40 years to pay for it. Look how they are trying to help us. Giving us rental money, our old people's pension, good schools, free books, paying the teachers, adult schools, clinics, doctors and medicine. Fruits of all kind free to our school children.

FEB 26 1941

Wake up and get on the job and help them and yourself. Fred Douglas and Booker T. Washington said once in a lecture to the colored people that if they wanted to be recognized as a race they must serve God, marry and raise good families, be good, trustworthy, truthful, honest citizens and work, be economical, save money and buy a home. Bishop Y. W. Bell and Dr. A. S. Clarke, two of the foremost race leaders of the south, in a lecture to the colored people this year advises them to work, be thrifty, economize and live good citizens, and the white race will surely help you.

Yours for peace and safety of all races.

REV. JUDSON DINKINS.
Cordele, Ga.

Negro Labor News
Houston, Texas

Negro Farmers Have Friend In Bledsoe

FEB 22 1941

WASHINGTON, D. C. —(ANP)— Back in 1939, when the ANP was establishing a foothold in Washington, one of the finest friends the organization had, and one of the finest friends the Negro race had in agriculture, was Samuel J. Bledsoe, a native of Memphis. It was Mr. Bledsoe who arranged the first interview with a presidential possibility that the ANP secured when he managed this with the now vice-president, Henry A. Wallace.

FEB 22 1941

As a member of the department of information in agriculture, Mr. Bledsoe had his finger on the pulse of a great many things. And through his outstanding efficiency in that organization, and the great work he did on his job, his many friends are happy to know that beginning April 1, Mr. Bledsoe will be assistant secretary of agriculture. This promotion insures the continuance of the many benefits Negroes have had through agriculture and further assures them of a "friend in court."

Age-Herald
Birmingham, Ala.

Farm Income Up

The cash income of America's farmers for 1940 was $9,120,000,000, which was 5 per cent higher than the 1939 income of $8,668,000,000. This income included returns from marketings, commodities placed under loans and government benefit payments.

The benefit payments were 5 per cent lower, but the other sources of revenue produced a 6 per cent greater return.

FEB 24 1941

Alabama's farm income for 1940 was, however, about $1,000,000 less than in 1939, the respective figures being $115,163,000 and $116,410,000.

Alabama was one of eight states which showed a smaller income, but the decline was greater in Louisiana, North Carolina, Florida and Mississippi due to smaller crops of sugar cane, cotton, citrus fruits, truck crops and tobacco.

FEB 24 1941

For the coming farm year the overshadowing problem in this area is the cotton outlook. Further restrictions of foreign markets for the staple have intensified this old, old problem. But vigorous governmental and cooperative attacks on it are under way.

Globe and Independent.
Nashville, Tenn.

AGRICULTURE IN 1941

JAN 24 1941

Agriculture, like the rest of us, is starting a new year with high hopes for success and achievement. And it is also starting a new year in which some of the greatest and most far-reaching problems in world history must be faced by all.

In these trying, swiftly changing times, agriculture must make the best possible use of the resources at its command. One of those resources is the marketing cooperative movement—a movement which has shown steady and significant growth in both size and influence year after year. Such co-ops do more than simply act as selling agents for their members, important as that is. They are alert to trends—they study the domestic and foreign problems which have a bearing on the farmers' welfare—they work toward better production at a lower cost through improved soil-utilization methods, etc. In short, anything and everything that affects agriculture falls within their province.

JAN 24 1941

It will be a better year for agriculture if the marketing cooperative movement makes continued progress.

Constitution
Atlanta, Georgia

Too Much Cotton.

That this country could get along without any trouble at all if the cotton crop for 1941 was entirely eliminated is shown in figures on cotton consumption and stocks on hand made public at the turn of the year.

JAN 5 19

On July 31, 1940, end of the official cotton season, the carryover, or cotton on hand, totaled about 10,600,000 bales. The 1940 crop was larger than expected, reaching approximately 12,500,000. Exports of cotton, due to war conditions, were only about one-fourth the average of recent years, with the result that the carryover by next July 31 is expected to be more than 13,000,000 bales.

JAN 5 1941

The one bright feature of the cotton picture is the steadily increasing domestic consumption. It is expected to reach 8,500,000 bales for the season, a record-breaking figure. Too, the domestic demand is expected to be even higher for the next season, because of the demands of the defense program.

However, with a total consumption, domestic and export combined, of 10,000,000 bales for the year, it is apparent that the expected carryover before the next crop comes in, of more than 13,000,000 bales, would be ample to supply all requirements for a year, even though not a pound of the staple was picked in 1941.

Which explains, beyond argument, why cotton producers don't receive the price they should for their crop.

2-1941

Advertiser
Montgomery, Ala.

THE TRUTH ABOUT COTTON

Some arresting figures on what the average Alabama farmer gets out of cotton were released recently by Commissioner of Agriculture Haygood Paterson. They indicate that the general run of cotton producers are getting but a meager return from a lifetime of love and devotion to the fleecy staple.

FEB 19 1941

For years cotton has been described as the one essential "money crop" for the deep South, even by many who admit the value of diversification. Commissioner Paterson bodly suggests abandonment of cotton production in many counties under present conditions. His suggestion is backed by impressive if somewhat painful details. Of course, the South has a sentimental attachment for cotton. The nation expects us to provide it with fields of snowy white. It somehow seems our duty to do so, even if we go broke in the attempt. If as surmised, the purpose of a "cash crop" is to provide the producer with cash, then in the case of cotton, it seems to be mostly a matter of unrequited love.

Prepared by the veteran F. W. Gist, economic adviser to the department, the figures show average value of cotton produced per farm in Alabama to be $170. In 17 counties, or one-fourth the total, the value of cotton crop per farm was under $100, with an average for the 17 of $74. For 33 counties, one-half the total, the figures ranged from $100 to $199, with an average for the 33 of $144. In only the remaining one-fourth, 17 counties, was the value per farm $200 or over, the average for the favored 17 being $265.

These figures are the gross income per farm from cotton, our vaunted indispensable cash crop. The prevailing rental system being one-half of the crop, it will be seen that the tenant cropper received only $37 per farm in the lowest group; $72 in the middle, and $132 in the highest group. When the cost of fertilizer and other cash expenses are considered, even the owner-operator does not seem to be gtting rich in a hurry.

The figures are especially significant for south Alabama. Of the 17 counties in the top group, with income of $200 or over per farm, all but three, Autauga, Elmore and Macon, are found in the northern part of the state. The lowest, $74 average group, includes five Black Belt counties.

These figures were arrived at from exhaustive study. They are for the 231,000 cotton porducing farms out of the total of 275.000 farms in the state. The figures are for 1939, but it is pointed out that a similar calculation for 1940 would not materially alter the picture. Value of the crop was calculated at 10 cents per pound, or $50 per bale.

"Why the average farmer in the average county of Alabama should depend upon cotton for the chief source of his income is inconceivable in the light of production results in the past two years," says the statement from Alabama's Department of Agriculture. The statement continues:

"A perusal of the accompanying figures will show definitely the necessity for farmers first growing a living on the farm, and the advisability of selecting other sources of cash income. In fact one is constrained to the belief that in many counties of this state farmers would be wise to entirely abandon the growth of cotton under present price, market, and soil conditions. In Montgomery county, for instance, it is found that while the income per farm from cotton was $165, the income of the average dairy farm during the same year was $326—the value of milk produced to say nothing of the value of the calf crop. A further study of returns from other crops would be enlightening in comparison with the brief study of the returns from cotton production.

FEB 19 1941

"Even with the receipts of cash from the government by cotton farmers in many of the counties of the state the income would not be sufficient for a decent living, and one is led to wonder if the continued encouragement to the growing of cotton coming from the government cotton program is wise in counties where such very low incomes result.

"As against the average for Alabama shown in the accompanying figures of $170 per farm, the average Texas cotton grower received $390 during the same year, with almost no expenditure for fertilizer, but with larger acreages per farm and lower yields per acre.

"Even with an approach to the so-called parity price of cotton the average income in Alabama would have been only $255 per farm while in Texas it would have been $780 Obviously, there are conditions affecting cotton production in Alabama much more important than an increase in the price of cotton. Certainly in some counties of lowest income the chief problem appears to be to eliminate cotton production and turn to something producing more value either in cash or family consumption."

GENERAL
Constitution
Atlanta, Georgia

A SUCCESS STORY

MAR 23 1941

TUMLIN HUBBARD, genial unswerving soul with a wrinkled blackish-brown face, whitening hair stubble kindly eyes and a merry cackle of a laugh, is the happiest, most successful man I know. He is a Negro share-cropper and part time wage-hand. In an age which presses more and more upon the individual, squeezing him into a mold and wastefully extracting the juices of his personality, Tumlin has beaten the system, has burst the chains, if you will, which seem to bind all but the scattered handful of truly great personages of each generation.

Thinking of Tumlin, and trying to portray in words the quality of the man, I remember how Atlanta city editors, in the years immediately after the first World War, used to send reporters at Christmas to interview Eugene Debs at the Federal Prison, and how it was said of Debs, as he sat thoughtfully reading in his cell or moved among his fellow-inmates, that it was wholly impossible to imprison him—his mind and heart were beyond the poor powers of steel and concrete to confine.

Well, Tumlin is in a sort of prison. Certainly no one who knows the cotton system, or any one-crop farming system, or the economic condition of any small farmer, black or white, owner, wage-hand, cropper or renter, would say he was free. No one, observing Tumlin's color, would call him free. No one, knowing the mores of Negroes, their taboos, fears and rigid punishments, would consider him free Yet, prisoner that he is, Tumlin Hubbard is the freest man I ever saw.

He is alive and feels it. He is unique, as is every one of his billions of fellow-creatures that the world has produced, and he knows it. He is a part of creation, of the stars, the hoot owls, the mules, the trees, the singing rivers, the majestic vistas, and he has the sense of it in his heart. . . He is also very practical.

MAR 23 1941

HOW HE SOLVED MARITAL PROBLEMS

It will strain the credulity of many southerners to read—what is true—that Tumlin, among other notable feats, has solved honorably an unsatisfactory marital situation. He found his wife sharp-tongued and predatory, and his grown or nearly grown children shiftless, disloyal and predatory. So he moved off to a separate place, where he lives alone, but he visitis his family briefly of Sundays and brings them as much money and "supplies" as if he lived at home.

"They still tries to badgah and discontent me," he will confide to a white intimate who respects his point of view, "but they knows they can't hurt my peace any. They just amuses themselves tryin', and I don't mind that."

Tumlin's house, which he built himself of cast-off and, in a few instances, donated materials, is a curiosity. It is conventional enough outside, though somewhat small, but the interior is amazing. He keeps it so stuffed with odds and ends he picks up around the farm and in his long wanderings about the countryside that it is literally necessary for him to reach inside, when he opens the front door, and lift out some of the contents before he can enter.

Fundamentally, the single room contains a woodburning cookstove, a cleanly, made-up cot, a few chairs and Tumlin's cooking equipment and spare clothes, but none is visible upon first entering. A retired grindstone will be found neatly "filed" upon the stove, a large piece of angle-iron, plow points, boxes filled with other nondescript treasures seem to fill all of the space from floor to roof. It is an unsolved mystery how he cooks or manages to go to bed. Yet, if any emergency arises on the farm requiring make-shift equipment while the real need is being filled from Culberson, the county seat, Tumlin is able to produce it unfailingly.

MAR 23 1941

A HOT MEAL IS A NECESSITY

His practicality, as well as his strength of character, is shown in one fact alone which every rural-born southerner will evaluate justly. Tumlin "biles the pot" at least once every day. That is to say, he insists on having warm, cooked food. This may seem as nothing to the uninitiate until he learns of the startling extent to which country Negroes subsist on cold viands, cornbread, molasses, chill and greasy greens and "fat back," and out of cans.

"A man," says Tumlin, "should be willin' to go to some trouble. When he don't give his insides hot food they know it and they tell him about it."

It is said among the Negroes that one of Tumlin's reasons for leaving the wife to whom he still discharges his obligations was that she was a staunch adherent of the cold-food school. Tumlin, knowing he must work with his muscles and hands until he died, knew, too, he couldn't rightly serve himself, "the old 'oman" or the children on the kind of victuals she offered. But, note that he didn't beat her or just go off and take up with some feminine person who saw more nearly eye to eye with him in matters culinary. . . .

Another point about this paragon of a man is this: He cultivates a garden of his own! This, too, is little short of astounding, as, again country southerners will attest. Try as you will, it is well nigh impossible to interest Negroes (and this applies to many whites) in raising their own foodstuff. And a cow is unthinkable. For generations now, the cotton-growing rural population has been getting its rations from the supply-store or commissary. For many years they weren't encouraged to have gardens—the "supplies" being a part of the system.

MAR 23 1941

But observe of Tumlin, who grew up in this atmosphere and had no observable outward reason for being different, that the hottest, dryest late afternoons of deep summer will see him carrying water from a well in the mule lot, many bucketfuls, cheerily exchanging badinage with other hands going home, and carefully supplying the thirsty plants. His garden thrives. He has greens—turnip greens, collards, rape, mustard—through the greater part of the year, far into the frost. He has tomatoes, large and red and succulent. He has corn and squash. He has great potatoes and the sweet and juicy yams.

With it all he has health and a vast satisfaction in his accomplishment. MAR 23 1941

When the farm first knew Tumlin the genial superstition soon got about that he consisted only of a high, gleeful voice, wiry shoulders and two long arms. This was because for months on end he worked for day-wages ditching some wet bottoms which had laid long neglected. It was hard work, and solitary, done in a lonely place. Walking about the farm, through the woods, past the elder-grown branch, one would come suddenly upon Tumlin at his back-breaking task. He spaded neatly, carefully, with an engineering feeling for graduated depth. The walls were straight, firm, correct. The bottom was clean, as only the red Georgia clay can be clean.

A HARD WORKER, ALWAYS SMILING

It was awe-inspiring, somehow, this display of sturdy character, for no one was there to observe, as a rule, and he could have loafed much and worked slackly without unpleasant results. But there he was, hour upon hour, the shoulders bending rhythmically, the arms rising, the spadefuls of compact, wet earth slapping up and over beside the ditch wall.

And a face that smiled easily, and, in repose, fell into contented lines. MAR 23 1941

Tumlin not only can read but is a discriminating reader. He has as good a grasp of the currents and nuances of the present World War as, say, the average town dweller. This he maintains understandably enough by perusing the world-news section of the Sunday New York Times which his employer passes on to him. (He is certain that Hitler "can't make it.") As steady reading at the moment he is deep in "Gone With the Wind." If you think he is late getting around to it, inquire of back-country southern folk how many have read it. He likes the news magazines, and has his favorites among the editorial columnists of the unfailing Atlanta Constitution.

He is a great walker and ruminator.

"I likes to get about and see all the things that are growin' and livin' just like me," he explains. "I don't ever get tired seein' 'em." MAR 23 1941

He will talk to a mule as readily as to a man, and his way with mules, and dogs or pets is the way of a man of deep understanding. He is as good a plowman as ever went down a furrow. but his voice and sure hand on the line are enough.

Tumlin has a violin from which he extracts music, somewhat weird of sound, but to him most satisfying. On moonlit nights, when the wind is down, his sawing fiddle can be heard clearly through the quarter-mile between his slightly mist-enclosed house and the farm-house where his employer's family as a rule will be sitting on the porch. They will smile gently, appreciatively, warmly.

"Tumlin's at it again," someone will observe. The others will nod understandingly.

They know what the words are meant to convey—

A man of character, an artist, a very staunch and human old man — a philosopher — is communing happily with his own soul.

Daily World
Atlanta, Georgia

Editorial Of The Month

MAY 5 - 1941

TODAY, WHEN the whole world is torn and being torn asunder by wars—rumors of wars—international disputes—national discords in government, and field of labor, it is no small wonder that the nerves of the world are in a pivot.

In fact, when the internal conditions are as they are today in our country, it gives very little time to consider affairs of other nations, even though despite domestic affairs, our nation is called upon daily to help ease the pains of other nations of the earth.

Today in our country, the machines preparing for total defense are rapidly advancing toward their capacity. Gigantic fortifications are rising throughout the nation, camps are springing up over night—guns, shells, tanks, and planes are being turned out in mass quantities — thousands of the nation's young men are being rushed off to military training, and as our President desires, the United States of America is swiftly becoming the *"Arsenal of Democracy"*.

MAY 5 - 1941

The Negro is giving wholeheartedly to this gigantic mechaniem of preparedness. In the factory, the government, the home the school, the press, and far (very, very far) from being least—in the fields of agriculture. The Negro farmer stands as the "MAN WITH THE HOE", ready, willing, and able to feed the armies not of America alone, but the entire world, which he will do again, as before. No matter what the outcome has been, it was the duty of our farmers to feed the world. The Negro farmer is an unselfish person.

He does not complain over the small consideration given him by the government, nor does he offer any criticism to the "powers that be", because he is left out of the picture on many, many occasions when even his labors are debated upon. Thus it is today that the Negro farmer takes up his hoe, and plow to begin the task of feeding the armies of the earth.

We are constantly told by the press and the radio of strikes, labor disorders, disputes, etc. All this occurs because the unions have had too much interference in business. It is the assigned duty of the union to see that the laborer gets a fair break. That is a good assignment, but this very seldom is the case, especially where the Negro is concerned. Usually the Negro is made the "goat", and left holding the bag (empty, of course). He is told to demand individually (which never brings results) when only by collectivity can any good be derived . . . but in this setup, the Negro being inexperienced with union methods, has been led to his own destruction before he realized he was being "fleeced."

So, today when this nation is infested with every conceivable kind of spy — fifth columnists — propagandists known to the world — we must stand against these unholy groups. First, they are not interested in this American government (only to the extent of destroying it). Their interests lie in the governments of their employers, and they are planting all their ideas throughout the laboring structure of our nation. Therefore, today as never before—beware! Beware of those who offer gullible get-rich schemes by joining some union. MAY 5 - 1941

We should stand together as never before. We should guard with our lives that which is most vital to us—the preservation of the American way of life.

We should seek as never before to harmonize race relationship within our country. We should seek to destroy once and finally anything that is tinted of "ism" other than "True Americanism". There should be no appeasement to any group or set of groups of those radicals who would destroy our American institute of government or would encourage lack of patriotism among our masses.

Again it is the purpose and intention of this publication to fight with all its strength and vigor anything which might be detrimental to the Negro Race. It is its pledge to work untiringly to bring about greater understanding between the two great races of people—the white and the black. We shall at all times put the true facts before our people. By so doing, we shall bring about a state of understanding, so very necessary in such times as these.

This publication which has as its basis—the betterment of our race on the farms, and the various industries—is striving with all its zeal and power to bring about greater cooperation on the part of employer and employe. It is gratifying to report excellent progress throughout the state along these lines. We have seen the evils of these shyster FARMERS' UNIONS—organizations tinted with communism, fascism and other evils just as great—try to create friction and disputes where only peace has been before.

We have seen many of our people left without employment or homes, because they were weak minded enough to try to grab a rainbow. We have seen once progressive towns, and factory communities of our people deserted because some union made it impossible for a man to operate his own business . . . Thus we try to alleviate unnecessary strife by pointing a way to peaceful understanding between employer and employe. MAY 5 - 1941

Our farmers must not pay heed to any of those selfish persons who desire ti enrich themselves at the expense of the farmers. Such persons are known to be standing ready at a moment's notice to send their agents throughout the country to retard work on the farm—but the Negro farmers will not be led astray, but will give, as they have always given, all that is needed to maintain our democratic governments, and the departments thereof. The Negro farmer is ready for total preparing of food for the armies

Daily World
Atlanta, Georgia

Seen And Felt

In a recent tour through the rural areas, we were thrilled at the sights of a bigger and better return to the farm. On every hand is the ploughman, turning up the fresh soil —soil that has lain inert for many years for the want of the tilling hand. Farmhouses are under repair and there is an added atmosphere of home and plenty surrounding these once deserted haunts.

FEB 23 1941

The music of the saw teeth ripping through the heart of the timbers brings the recollection of old times before the first World War. The piles of new lumber, the shavings and the fly of the saw-dust tell us that our people are returning to work and that payrolls are fast supplanting relief projects and continued charity.

The anvil in the blacksmith shop, the clipping of the harrow, the cluck of the wagon and the song of harvest are the fundamental ideals of the American people. Thomas Jefferson said long ago that America was the land of the farmer and the settlers of America were farmers first. The great agricultural possibilities, coupled with the urge and will to work are the great principles by which our people traveled to prosperity and independence.

While war conditions, calling for the building of cantonments, air bases, and hospitals and those projects accompanying such a program, may be given credit for the big rural boom, there is evidence that after this war, our people will have to have the commodities raised in this country. In addition to this, if trade rules are unbearable and shipping on the high seas is too expensive, our people will face the great task of growing and processing the many things which we have used to buying abroad. This will involve land tenantship and the keeping at work of millions of people heretofore on the backs of the tax payers.

The sights in the rurals show that our people have not lost faith in America's oldest vocation. The fine roads, good schools, and community centers dotting the red hills have placed a new emphasis on country life and convenience. No longer is the rural a taboo.

FEB 23 1941

Those of us who had for our native heath the broad apron of the soil, welcome a comeback of the farm. We want to see the old schoolhouses rebuilt, the rural church and lodgeroom come back and a happy contented people undwarfed by living on relief rolls and eking out an existence on the uncertain regulations of charity.

There is no beauty comparing with the blossom of the peach trees, the budding of the willows and the grass, the rich perfume from the honeysuckles and the scent of blushing corn. No music is so sweet as the rattle of the plowgear, the tinkling of the dinner-bell and the soft and even tone of the cowbell—the great heritages of this country.

Commercial Appeal
Memphis, Tennessee

Cotton Stalks Will Be Used In Manufacture Of Cellulose

JAN 31 1941

Special to The

SUNFLOWER, Miss., Jan. 30.—A new industry, the harvesting of cotton stalks for the making of cellulose, is getting underway in Sunflower County.

A contract for 11,000 tons of cotton stalks has been let in this county by the American Cellulose, Inc., of Toledo, Ohio, which was formed recently to manufacture cellulose from cotton stalks. The process was perfected by L. I. Ulrich, a chemist, after 10 years research.

The cellulose is used in the manufacture of paper pulp and wall board with a byproduct of cellulose acetate used largely in the manufacture of paint.

Plantation owners are being paid $7.50 per ton for the cotton stalks delivered baled to the gins in Sunflower and Inverness. The average acre will yield about two tons of stalks, it is said, with the cost of gathering and baling running about $3 per ton.

Reports here say a plant to manufacture the cotton stalk cellulose may be located in Greenville within a short time.

Chicago Bee
Chicago, Illinois

BLEDSOE, ASST. SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

FEB 23 1941

WASHINGTON, Feb. 20—(ANP)—Back in 1939 when the ANP was establishing a foothold in Washington, one of the finest friends the organization had, and one of the finest friends the Negro race had in agriculture, was Samuel Bledsoe, a native of Memphis. It was Mr. Bledsoe who arranged the first interview with a presidential possibility that the ANP secured when he managed this with the now vice president Henry A. Wallace.

As a member of the department of information in agriculture, Mr Bledsoe had his finger on the pulse of a great many things. And through his outstanding efficiency in that organization, and the great work he did on his job, his many friends are happy to know that beginning April 1 Mr. Bledsoe will be assistant secretary of agriculture. This promotion insures the continuance of the many benefits Negroes have had through agriculture and further assures them of a "friend in court."

Spartanburg S C Herald
February 18, 1941

The State's Farm Problem

One hundred farmers and farm women were guests of the Spartanburg Rotary Club at its luncheon yesterday and the thought that probably was uppermost in their minds had to do with plans to spread the live-at-home agricultural program throughout Spartanburg county. That is the most important problem facing the farmers of the county and the State of South Carolina.

The Herald recently emphasized the findings of a survey of more than one thousand farms in Spartanburg county which showed that a large proportion of them were not producing enough butter and milk, wheat, livestock, feed, poultry and eggs, vegetables, and other farm crops to meet the requirements of farm families.

Efforts will be made this spring to change these conditions in the hope that every farm may produce the food and feed it needs and prevent the enormous outflow of farm cash to other states. The Columbia State last week commented upon this failure of the farms of South Carolina to feed the families that tend them, as follows:

More than 17,000 farm families in South Carolina grow no vegetables.

More than 80,000 grow no wheat.
More than 20,000 have no chickens.
More than 48,000 have no cows.
More than 14,000 grow no corn.
More than 24,000 have no hogs.

In addition to the startling numbers of farm families totally deficient in essential farm items, many others produce less than needed on their own premises. For example:

Including those totally deficient, more than 33,000 South Carolina farmers have not enough corn; more than 97,000 have not enough wheat; more than 47,000 have not enough poultry; more than 63,000 have not enough milk; more than 54,000 have not enough vegetables—and so on.

These are gloomy figures. They tell a story of ineffective leadership in this state over a period of many years—of a generation or two generations. They tell a story of ignorance, and its consequences. But the stories told by these figures need not be accepted as completed. They must not be accepted as completed stories. A few years of first class educational work in the interest of white children and of Negro children —in the interest of South Carolina—will give us other and much less gloomy stories in figures.

The present agricultural program in South Carolina should be a warning to those who would deny the boys and girls of the state the benefits of full public school education. Thousands of tenants cannot understandingly read bulletins issued by the farm extension service and Clemson College. How can they be expected properly to till their land? Their children are growing up in the ignorance of their fathers and another generation of poor farmers is in the making. And that ignorance applies much more to Negro tenants than to white.

Age-Herald
Birmingham, Ala.

SHARECROPPING ON WANE

WASHINGTON, April 2 (AP)—The Census Bureau said Tuesday there were fewer sharecroppers now than at any time in the last two decades. The 1940 census found 541,291 sharecroppers in 16 states, 234,987 less than in 1940. The decline was attributed to increased use of power machinery which caused some landlords to discontinue leasing part of their land, and to programs assisting sharecroppers to buy their land. Mississippi led in this type of farming, its 125,483 sharecroppers being more than double those in any other state.

APR 2 1941

Cullman, Ala. Democrat
February 6, 1941

The Farm Fuel Supply

The low income of Alabama farmers make it imperative that cash outlay be held down to a minimum. The farm wood lot properly conserved will solve the farmer's fuel needs. In several Tennessee Valley farm communities, forests have almost completely disappeared, and there remains not even an acre of woods from which to obtain the farm fuel supply. Even Negro tenants are buying coal for fuel, that were formerly supplied by wood.

In Cullman County nearly every farm at present has a sufficient amount of forest acreage left from whence to obtain an adequate farm fuel supply. Eventually however, if the woodland is not conserved, our farmers will be forced to purchase coal for fuel. They, for the most part, can not afford this extra and unnecessary expense. Sufficient woodland should be, by all means retained, to eliminate an expensive cash outlay for imported fuel. A few acres of forest, carefully husbanded will solve the fuel problem permanently on the farm.

Atlanta Ga Constitution
March 1, 1941

SAYS NEGRO FAMILIES WON'T RETURN TO FARM

Editor Constitution: I read with much interest this morning in your great paper, the letter from the colored minister, the Rev. Judson Dinkins, of Cordele, Ga., advising the members of his race to leave the towns and cities, and return to the farms.

We have a lot of colored families who have drifted from the farms to the cities and made good, and they deserve credit for doing so, and they are just as important to the welfare of the country as they would be on the farms.

But the ones who should return to the farms are those who are now accepting public assistance, either direct relief or WPA. These families, both white and colored, should be cut from the public assistance rolls if they refuse to return to the farms.

We have a large farm, and we need three colored families on it, and we have tried to get them through the Georgia Employment Service, the WPA headquarters, county agents and regular employment agencies, but we get the same answer from all—they will not return to the farm.

I suggest a clearing house be set up between the farmers and the public assistance rolls and when a family on any of the rolls refuses to return to the farm when given this opportunity, th they immediately be cut off.

Cordele, Ga. Dispatch
February 26. 1941

Golden Opportunity For Colored People

A word of advice to the colored people, my race, the negroes of the south:

Through the plans of God and our Government, the colored people have the greatest opportunity presented to them now on the farms than has ever been presented to them, and I want to advise them to grasp this golden opportunity before it is too late.

Go back to the farm where you can raise and have plenty of fresh good food to eat and live happy; where you can get your houses free, gardens and water free, where you can raise good children and serve God.

Sin, vice and lazziness are destroying the negro race every where. The chain-gang and penitentiaries are crowded with them.

Jobs are scarce in small cities. Farm production is much needed, and prices are good in war time. The Government Farm Housing Project offers you anything you want. Will sell you a home, rent you a farm, let you have money, stock and give you forty years to pay for it. Look how they are trying to help us. Giving us rental money, our old peoples pensions, good schools, free books, paying the teachers, adult schools, clinics, doctors and medicine. Fruits of all kind free to our school children.

Wake up and get on the job and help them and our self. Fred Douglas and Booker T. Washington said once in a lecture to the colored people that if they wanted to be recognized as a race they must serve God marry and raise good families, be good trustworthy, truthful, honest citizens and work, be economical, save money and buy a home. Bishop Y. W. Bell and Dr. A. S. Clarke, two of the foremost race leaders of the south, in a lecture to the colored people this year advised them to work, be thrifty, economize and live good citizens, and the white race will surely help you.

Yours for peace and safety of all races.

Reverend Judson Dinkins.

Advertiser
Montgomery, Ala.

Farm Wife Finds Life Superior To Sister's Who Lives In Town

Savings Effected in Household Budget by Electrical Equipment Make Acquisition of All Essential Appliances Simple Matter

MAR 27 1941

By FRANK J. G. DUCK
Farm Electrification Bureau

There are few farm men or women who, enjoying their equal electrical benefits, would change places with their city brethren. For, with the coming of high-line electricity, rural life has assumed all the comforts and conveniences of the city—and the advantages are now with the farmer. Undoubtedly, that is one of the principal reasons for the "back to the farm" movement which set in a few years ago and which has continued with increasing momentum ever since.

Of course, it goes almost without saying that the modern electrified farm home is adequately wired and lighted, that it is provided with a pressure water system and complete bathing and toilet facilities, and that it has an up-to-date radio. But, beyond this, it has many electrical appliances which, until comparatively recent times, were considered luxuries even in urban and suburban homes.

Thus, the electric range of even 10 years ago was so expensive in first and operating cost that it was available to only a relative few. Today, greatly improved in appearance, convenience and efficiency, it costs only half as much to own and to run, and now is within the means of all.

Clean, Safe Fast

Of all the fuels that can be used for cooking, none offers all the advantages of electricity which include simplicity, constant temperature, speed, safety, cleanliness, coolness and economy. Considering only the last point, in a recent test three complete meals a day for three days for four people were cooked electrically at a current cost of only 18 cents. The guesses of the audience which witnessed the tests ranged from nine to 50 cents.

MAR 27 1941

Thus was settled once and for all, the old bugaboo that electric cooking is only for the very well-to-do With a modern low-priced electric range—from under $100 to about $200 (depending on the size and appointments)—and with the special low power rates available in most parts of the country, cooking with electricity is well within the financial reach of every electrified farm home.

Like the electric range, the electric refrigerator has been greatly reduced in price and improved in efficiency and usability in recent years. Actually, it is a year-'round necessity on the farm for the temperature of a cold cellar or spring house is never sufficiently low in the Summer to prevent extensive food spoilage and deterioration. And, particularly in the Winter, an electric refrigerator is infinitely more convenient.

Depending upon the capacity, construction and interior equipment, electric refrigerators vary in price from approximately $100 to about $250. Ordinarily, at usual electric rates, it costs from three to six cents per day to operate one, which will quickly pay for itself many times over in the food that it saves.

Farm Choice Easy

As practically all of the electric refrigerators manufactured today are dependable, efficient and economical, the farmer can make his choice confident that he will receive full value for the money invested. However, he should buy from a reliable dealer who will give prompt and proper service on the rare occasions it is necessary.

It is even more important to the farm family that the appliance have sufficient capacity—measured on a net cubic foot basis—as there is a general tendency, especially among those who never have had refrigeration, to install too small a unit.

The comforts of an automatic electric pressure water system are only half realized if it does not at all times provide an ample supply of hot as well as cold water. For practically unlimited hot water, an automatic electric storage heater is the thing to use.

MAR 27 1941

Such heaters are regularly obtainable with capacities of from 10 to 140 gallons and, on special order, up to 1,000 gallons. They are available in round, square and table-high types, the latter providing additional working space in the farm kitchen. For sizes between 30 and 140 gallons, electric water heater prices range from $2 to $1 per gallon capacity.

Depending on its size and the temperature and quantity of water used, an electric storage heater will require from 150 to 600 kw-hr. per month. At an off-peak rate of one cent, the cost thus would be $1.50 to $6 per month, with an average of about $3.50. This is cheaper than either kerosene, gasoline, oil or gas (except in a few localities). And it is infinitely more convenient, cleaner and safer than either wood or coal.

Easily Financed

All of these appliances, and many others, usually can be financed by deferred payments. Of course, if he prefers to pay cash, the farmer can install them one at a time as money is available.

MAR 27 1941

In either event, he need not wait to enjoy, progressively, the comforts, conveniences and pleasures of electrical living, for he can commence by buying the numerous small helpful appliances and thereby launch his plan for living electrically.

Daily World
Atlanta, Georgia

Those Who Would Destroy

FEB 27 1941

TODAY, WHEN the whole world is torn, and being torn asunder by wars—rumors of wars—international disputes—national discords in government, and the field of labor, it is no small wonder that the nerves of the world are on a pivot.

In fact, when the internal conditions are as they are today in our country, it gives very little time to consider affairs of other nations, even though despite domestic affairs, our nation is called upon daily to help ease the pains of other nations of the earth.

Today in our country, the machines preparing for total defense are rapidly advancing toward their capacity. Gigantic fortifications are rising throughout the nation, camps are springing up over night—guns, shells, tanks and planes are being turned out in mass quantities — thousands of the nation's young men are being rushed off to military training, and as our President desires, the United States of America is swiftly becoming the *"Arsenal of Democracy"*.

The Negro is giving wholeheartedly to this gigantic mechanism of preparedness. In the factory, the government, the home, the school, the press, and far (very, very far) from being least—in the fields of agriculture. The Negro farmer stands as the "MAN WITH THE HOE", ready, willing, and able to feed the armies not of America alone, but the entire world, which he will do again, as before. No matter what the outcome has been, it was the duty of our farmers to feed the world. The Negro farmer is an unselfish person.

FEB 27 1941

He does not complain over the small consideration given him by the government, nor does he offer any criticisms to the "powers that be", because he is left out of the picture on many, many occasions when even his labors are debated upon. Thus, it is today that the Negro farmer takes up his hoe, and plow to begin the task of feeding the armies of the earth.

We are constantly told by the press and the radio of strikes, labor disorders, disputes, etc. All this occurs because the unions have had too much interference in business. It is the assigned duty of the union to see that the laborer gets a fair break. That is a good assignment, but this very seldom is the case, especially where the Negro is concerned. Usually the Negro is made the "goat", and left holding the bag (empty, of course). He is told to demand individually (which never brings results) when only by collectivity can any good be derived . . . but in this setup, the Negro being inexperienced with union methods, has been led to his own destruction before he realized he was being "fleeced."

So, today when this nation is infested with every conceivable kind of spy — fifth columnists — propagandists known to the world—we must guard against these unholy groups. First, they are not interested in this American government (only to the extent of destroying it). Their interests lie in the governments of their employers,, and they ar planting all their ideas throughout the laboring structure of our nation. Therefore, today as never befo —beware! Beware of those who offer gullible get-rich schemes by joining some union.

We should stand together as never before. We should guard without lines that which is most vital to us—the preservation of the American way of life.

FEB 27 1941

This publication which has as its basis—the betterment of our race on the farms, and the various indusries—is striving with all its zeal and power to bring about greater cooperation on the part of employer and employe. It is gratifying to report excellent progress throughout the state along these lines. We have seen the evils of these shyster FARMERS' UNIONS—organizations tinted with communism, fascism and other evils just as great—try to create friction and disputes where only peace has been before.

We have seen many of our people left without employment or homes, because they were weak minded enough to try to grab a rainbow. We have seen once progressive towns, and factory communities of our people deserted because some union made it impossible for a man to operate his own business . . . Thus we try to alleviate unnecessary strife by pointing a way to peaceful understanding between employer and employe.

Our farmers mus not pay heed to any of those unselfish persons who desire to enrich themselves at the expense of the farmers. Such persons are known to be standing ready at a moment's notice to send their agents through out the country to retard work on the farm—but the Negro farmers will not be led astray, but will give, as they have always given; all that is needed to maintain our democratic governments, and the departments thereof. The Negro farmer is ready for total preparing of food for the armies of Uncle Sam, and if necessary, the armies of Democracy. He is not—has not—and never will be a slacker.

—*B. Everette Moore.*

—From The Shreveport (La.) World

Daily World
Atlanta, Georgia

New Challenge

MAR 27 1941

IN THE GREAT agricultural areas of this country, the cooperative marketing movement is making rapid progress—both in membership and in influence and prestige. There is a good reason for that. The thinking farmer, beset by new and difficult problems which war abroad and defense at home have produced, realizes as never before the necessity of organized selling effort.

MAR 27 1941

That the marketing cooperatives will meet this new challenge, no one who knows their history can doubt. Back of them lie many years of signal achievement—their organizations have been geared to meet the demands of emergency periods. They are, in short, ready to give the farmer a service that is vital to his future

Times-Picayune
New Orleans, La.

FARMER POOREST, ASSERTS ALDRICH

MAR 29 1941

(Special to The Times-Picayune)

Purvis, Miss., March 28.—Ransom E. Aldrich, president of the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation, told members of the Lamar county farm bureau in a speech at the courthouse here that the total cash income for Mississippi farmers, including the government payments, has declined steadily for five years until the income for 1940 was $50,000,000 less than that for 1936. The only farm industry that has shown a gain during this period is that of live stock which has a gain of $4,500,000, according to Mr. Aldrich.

"The only remedy for this situation," he said, "is for farmers to band together in order to convince the rest of the world that farming is a business instead of a "way of life." "The farmer is the poorest paid worker in America," he continued, "and it is because he will not co-operate and demand the right to help formulate farm programs."

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Mr. Aldrich said the farm bureau was responsible for inclusion of a farm appropriation in the federal budget this year, but he said the administration has neglected farm interests in laying plans for the defense program.

"If you farmers put on an expansion program to take care of the increased demands for farm products, do you have any assurance that your taxes will not be raised or that you will be taken care of when the program is over?" he demanded. "You do not have any protection, but industry and labor do," he said, "and the only way you can get protection is to band together so strongly that you can demand the respect of Congress and other groups.

Mr. Aldrich deplored the number of farm agencies operating under the department of agriculture, and said that farmers are "bound up with too much red tape" and spend too much time attending meetings at the county seat and going to the county agent's offices to inquire for government checks. He compared the checks to "a sugar teat held in front of farmers" to induce them to vote more than 96 per cent for the AAA program in which they have no voice in planning.

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"We are going to have crazy regulations, such as the cotton stamp plan, until we demand a change in the system," he said.

He approved the defense training now being given to 10,000 youths in Mississippi, and said that with such training the state can soon claim skilled labor enough to demand more industries to balance agriculture.

Kosciusko, Miss. Star-Herald
March 6, 1941

NEGRO FARMERS URGED TO JOIN THE FARM BUREAU

Saturday, February 15, 1941 Negro leaders came from every section of the county to discuss current farm problems. They were told that there are 494 Negro land owners, 1609 Negro farmers, and over 9,000 Negroes or about one-third of the total population of the county directly depending on the farm and the production of the farm for their living.

These farmers decided that disparity of income is one of the reasons that farmers are not receiving their fair share of the nations income.

Everyone present pledged themselves to go back into the communities and hamlets where their leadership is felt and explain the situation to the mass of Negro farmers in the county. This is to be done in order that Attala county's Negro enrollment this year will come up to the Negro enrollment in the other counties of the state.

The Negro farm leaders of the county feel that a large amount of the income received as a result of the program gotten over by the efficient leadership of the farm bureau goes directly to the 365,000 Negro farmers of the state of Mississippi.

Through this article they wish to appeal to every Negro farmer to pay up his membership dues in the Farm Bureau in order that we may show to Mississippi and the nation that we are proud and that we indorse the agricultural leadership of the nation.

In keeping with the above spirit the following leaders came forth and paid their membership dues for 1941:

James Shines, J. W. Thornton, M. W. Williams, Ivory Burt, Andrew Burt, Frank Burt, Henry Burt, Nathan Burt, George Burt, Lovie Mallet, Lige Winters, Ike Love, Will Thornton, E. S. Murff, Mrs. Joanna Little, Burt Wallace, Jessie Barfield, Dave Brown.

New York Times
New York, N. Y.

FARM POPULATION IS SAME AS IN 1930

APR 23 1941

Census Studies Show Change Will Be Negligible

APR 23 1941

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WASHINGTON, April 22—Preliminary studies disclose only a negligible change in the farm population between 1930 and 1940, Virgil D. Reed, acting director of the Census Bureau, said today.

The farm population in April, 1940, was 30,475,206, according to a preliminary tabulation of the 5 per cent cross-section of the census returns. As the total of farm residents in 1930 was 30,445,350, the difference between the preliminary 1940 estimate and the 1930 figure—29,856, or 0.1 per cent—is so small that it is not possible to state whether there was an increase or decrease during the decade. However, Mr. Reed said, the change would be negligible.

In 1940, according to the sample returns, the urban-farm population was 324,130, as compared to 287,837 in 1930. Thus there was an increase of about 8 per cent in the decade.

The farm population, both urban and rural, was 23.1 per cent of the nation's population in 1940, 24.8 in 1930 and 29.0 in 1920. It is evident, Mr. Reed said, that while the farm population remained about stationary, the non-farm population has been increasing at a fairly rapid rate.

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Part of the explanation for the lack of increase, according to Mr. Reed, lies in the fact that farm practices are becoming more efficient so that smaller numbers of workers are needed to produce all of the products that can be marketed. Another factor is the decline in recent years in exportation of certain agricultural products.

The number of farms decreased 3.1 per cent between 1930 and 1940, so the average farm population per farm increased slightly from 4.8 to 5.

APR 23 1941

The farm population comprises all persons living on farms without regard to occupation. The urban farm group comprises those living on farms in urban areas.

Connecticut and New Jersey showed a substantial gain in farm population during the decade, while New York had a loss of 16,323 or 2.3 per cent. In New York the figures were 703,606 for 1940 and 719,929 for 1930.

In New Jersey the gain was 15.363 per cent, based on a population of 146,459 in 1940 and 131,096 in 1930.

In Connecticut the increase was 17.143 per cent, the figures being 103,913 for 1940 and 86,770 for 1930.

Gadsden, Ala., Times
April 21, 1941

Tenancy Seen As Farm Evil

Catholic Rural Life Leader Also Deplores Large Scale Operations

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., April 21. (AP) — Tenancy and commercial large-scale farming were criticized as the "greatest evils in agriculture today," by the Most Rev. Vincent J. Ryan, president of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, in an address at the conferences of the Catholic Committee of the South here today.

The farm problem is soluble, Bishop Ryan declared, with the answer chiefly in educating present and future rural generations for farming and in promoting a rural homestead movement for industrial workers.

Dr. M. M. McHatton, horticulturist at the University of Georgia, asserted a lack of faith in the possibilities of agriculture was responsible for the "doldrums in the rural areas."

"If we increase the farmer's faith in the potentialities of farming, develop proper production and business cooperation within rural communities, and stop leaning on government subsidies and other political paneceas for agricultural rehabilitation, we may go far toward bringing the rural South back into a better economic condition," he said.

A testimonial will be paid Dr. George Washington Carver, Negro scientist at Tuskegee Institute, by Bishop Thomas J. Toolen, Mobile, with a response to Dr. Carver broadcast at 2:30 p. m. from his Tuskegee home tomorrow.

Sylacauga, Ala., New
April 11, 1941

DELTA NEGROES PLAN COTTON JUBILEE

GREENVILLE, Miss.—Negroes of the Mississippi Delta will stage a National Cotton Week of their own here and in Cleveland, Miss., April 29-30, when they hold their annual Cotton Makers' Jubilee.

Levye Chapple, director of public relations of the Delta Committee, told the National Cotton Council that arrangements are being made to have Dr. George Washington Carver, famous Negro scientist of Tuskegee, Ala., deliver one of the featured addresses at the meeting. Special events of the jubilee include a parade, band concerts and spirituals by a 200-voice Negro chorus.

Afro-American
Baltimore, Maryland

Sharecroppers to Benefit in '42 Farm Goals

MEMPHIS, Tenn.—Farm production goals for 1942 recently announced by Secretary of Agriculture Claude R. Wickard should be a boon to good health and a balanced diet for tenants and sharecroppers, official observers indicated this week following the agricultural defense conference here.

A large number of colored farmers fall into this class and in analyzing the goals, Department of Agriculture officials pointed out that in them, diversified farming and the live-at-home program have been given a real impetus.

More Livestock, Gardens

The operation of the program will encourage all farmers, colored and white alike, to raise more hogs, cows and chickens and farm gardens. This will serve to increase the supply of nutritious foods both for the farmer. himself, and for urban communities.

OCT 25 1941

The goals call for a substantial increase in livestock, dairy and poultry products, increases in fruits and of some vegetables for canning, less wheat and production of cotton and tobacco near present levels.

OCT 25 1941

With the army and migration making inroads into the supply of farm labor, it is believed that every available farmer, including tenants and sharecroppers, will be integrated into this program to help meet the production goals.

Constitution
Atlanta, Georgia

Few Georgia Vegetables

The 1940 census of agriculture presents, in cold figures, one chief reason for the economic plight of Georgia farmers.

There were 216,000 farms in the state. Only 27,698 of these farmers reported vegetables grown for sale, exclusive of potatoes. This is only 1,266 more than the number reporting for 1929.

The tables for individual vegetables are illuminating. Only 156 farmers grew asparagus. Only 6,322 grew snap, string or wax beans. Only 288 table beets. Only 178 carrots. Only 1,728 cucumbers. Only 42 eggplant. Only 167 spinach. Only 707 squash. Only 811 turnips.

These are only a few. The estimates for other vegetables are little better.

It is obvious the varied climate of Georgia should afford land adapted to the growth of many of these vegetables and that the market for them is available in the cities of the state. It means thousands upon thousands of dollars that should go to Georgia farmers is being siphoned out of the state to sections as far away as California.

The record is there. The answer must rest with Georgians.

Telegraph
Macon, Georgia

Baker Farmer With 52 Tenants Has Best Profits in 20 Years

LEARY, Nov. 5—"I've been farming for 44 years, but 1941 is the best year I've had in 20 years, and as good as any in the 44," said Will White, prominent Baker county farmer, who owns a farm with 300 acres under cultivation.

This year, Mr. White had 84 acres of Spanish and runner peanuts, and made 38 tons of no. 1's, receiving an average of $90 for the Spanish and $70 for the runner. He has been planting peanuts since the late teen-years when the boll weevil struck South Georgia, but has always made No. 1's. He does it by taking them up at the right time, he said, and stacking them after the moisture has dried from the roots, with the nuts turned to the pole and leaves out.

On 48 acres of cotton, Mr. White gathered 30 bales, receiving $100 for each bale with the seed. Last spring, from a patch of turnips 500 feet square, he sold around $50 worth of the greens. Then he gathered 24 pounds of turnip seeds, formed them into packets and sold them through stores in nearby towns.

Mr. and Mrs. White, left at home alone after the marriage of their children, believe in living at home. They cure plenty of meat for their own use, have milk and butter, chickens and eggs, grow cane for syrup, sweet potatoes, and are never without plenty of vegetables. It is little of any food which they buy. They are now fattening 11 calves for sale.

Refuting the theory that Negro share-croppers must always be ill-fed, Mr. White's tenants consist of 52 people in seven families. Every family is comfortably housed, all have ample gardens, some have raised as many as 10 banks of potatoes, and all have cane for syrup. The land for these patches was furnished them. Every tenant on the place came out this year from $50 to $100 ahead after paying all debts.

Telegraph
Macon, Georgia

The Circle

With Eugene Anderson

HE WAS WELL FIXED.—A Negro purchased an expensive farm within the Circle, and his neighbors wanted to know how he managed to make such big payments. Surely, he was getting government aid. "No," he replied, "he was pretty well fixed. He had two sons in New York, and one "still in Georgia."

ANDERSON

Van Buren Place Idle

THE JOHN VAN BUREN plantation and residence in lower Twiggs county is now unused. A few years ago it was purchased by the Sterlings of Chicago, and the residence was completely remodeled. The large acreage was fenced and fitted for cattle and hogs. It was regarded as an ideal place for a retired physician to get a much needed rest. But Mrs. Sterling, who had practiced medicine in Chicago for many years, died after about a year of residence in her new country estate, and later her son came down and negotiated for the Jordan home on Vineville avenue, announcing that he was planning to open an engineering office in Macon. He advertised also a big cattle sale for the Whiteface Herefords on the plantation at Griswold, sold the animals, and held matters in abeyance. The Jordan home was readvertised.

When houses were in such demand at Camp Wheeler, efforts were made to rent the Van Buren ho , as it was large enough for several families; but the caretaker reported that he was under instructions to let nobody enter the place.

Georgian Farms Year Around With 15 One-Horse Croppers

FEB 2 1941

By JACK WOOTEN,
Editor, Georgia Extension Service.

HAZLEHURST, Ga., Feb. 1.—G. L. Hinson, Jeff Davis county farmer, is one landowner in Georgia who gives full time employment to the 15 one-horse farmers on his place.

"Most of my farmers are in good circumstances," Hinson declares. "They all farm from January until January, and we have no trouble of unemployment during the winter."

All of the tenants on Hinson's farm plant heavy cover crops which the landowner personally cuts in with a tractor each year in order to keep the land in a high state of cultivation. The sharecroppers buy nothing they can produce; as a matter of fact, they sell the agricultural products grown on the farm.

Forest Protection.

Hinson, a turpentine operator, takes particular care in safeguarding his forest. He keeps all woodland protected from fire by cutting fire lanes and he grows timber faster than he can work it up. He has 500 acres of fence pasture with a good growth of carpet grass and lespedeza and on this he keeps all his dry cattle and yearlings the year round when they are not in the field.

Asked if he did his turpentine work with his farm labor, this landlord replied: "I do not work turpentine with farm labor. They have all they can do to run a farm."

Pecan Production.

Hinson has a 30-acre pecan grove which he tends himself, using the most scientific methods of cover crops and fertilizer. Both he and his tenants go in big for syrup. He has a power mill running full speed, a horse mill and evaporator and two 60-gallon kettles going full blast 24 hours a day during the season when syrup is being made on his farm. This year he had 20 acres of sugar cane on which he made between 600 and 700 gallons per acre. Hinson declares that he has never bought any feed for his livestock in all of his farming experience. "We grow it on the farm," he says.

Arrangements between landlord and tenant on this farm are ideal. Hinson furnishes each tenant a milk cow and in return for this they get the milk and butter and he gets the calf. He furnishes one good brood sow to each unit and the tenants get one-half the offspring. One-half of the farmers own their own mule and in return the landlord furnishes the fertilizer, seed and land, and they go 50-50 on the crop.

In case of the other half of the farmers Mr. Hinson furnishes one-half the fertilizer and the mules, and they go 50-50 on the crop.

Telegraph
Macon, Georgia

The Circle

MAR 1 1941

With Eugene Anderson

GEORGE FARMER, typical of most pig growers in Georgia loaded his truck crate with a half dozen six-months-old 200-pound pigs and sent them to Macon market.

"What are we going to do for crackin' bread, and souse, and chitterlings and sausage, and backbone and spareribs and lard and sidemeat for curing and ham for processing? What are our farm workers going to do for meat?" These were the questions asked by the faithful Mrs. Farmer.

Anderson

A few Negroes looked on, and said nothing as the truck moved off toward the market. No more watching to see if the weather would be cold enough, no more use for the scalding vats and the cleaning racks, no more need for the butcher knives. Men, women and children had lost another to be auctioned off liveweight.

The people had seen other trucks go by similarly loaded. Were all of the farmers forsaking the plantation custom that had always been followed? Was there never to be any more hog-killing time in the country?

An atmosphere of sadness, the sky looked gray overhead; but what had the weather to do with it anymore? Hadn't they sent hogs to town by the truckload even in midsummer? 'Frigerator plants, they said. Summer had become same as winter.

Electric sausage mills, wholesale supplies of casings. Curing is done differently. Everything is different. MAR 1 1941

George Farmer replied simply to his wife: "The new way is cheaper. We can't afford to compete with Uncle Sam's prices for labor. Hereafter we will sell what we have and buy what we want. When the country roads get paved, so trucks can come to our door, we won't have to go to the expense to send the animals to town."

Constitution
Atlanta, Georgia

TENANT Farmers Leaving Georgia

MAR 23 1941

By STILES A. MARTIN.

GEORGIA's farm tenant problem is being solved. The tenants themselves are solving this problem by simply leaving the farms.

In 1940 there were 44,540 fewer tenants on Georgia farms than in 1930, ten years before.

The number fell from 174,390 tenants in 1930 to 129,850 in 1940.

The number of farms in the state also showed a decrease of 39,565 in the 10-year period. The drop was from 255,598 in 1930 to 216,033 last year, the lowest number, perhaps in 60 years.

All of this information is contained in a report just issued in Washington by the Bureau of the Census, which gives many Georgia farm facts.

NATION-WIDE SUBJECT.

This southern tenant question or problem has been much discussed in recent years by economists and social workers generally. It has also been a topic for school and college theses all the way from Maine to California. Outside the south, mostly, the subject has been much discussed and was the basis of the book, "The Grapes of Wrath," later made into a moving picture. MAR 23 1941

This government report shows a gain of 5,607 farm owners over the 10-year period, there being 76,103 "full owners" of Georgia farms in 1940,, compared with 70,596 ten years before.

This indicates that farm ownership in the state is not increasing as rapidly as it was thought to be.

But the most startling feature of the report deals with the tenant question and the big decrease in the state over the 10-year period.

Now, assuming that the 5,607 new farm owners formerly were tenants, this reduction from 44,540 still leaves 38,933 families unaccounted for. What became of these nearly 39,000 farm families? Did they move to the cities and towns and swell the list of employed and unemployed there and maybe increased the relief rolls, too?

Allowing four to a family, this exodus of farmers represents 155,732 persons.

It may be that many of them did not actually leave the farms, but just quit farming "on their own" and became "day laborers" for farmers.

GAIN IN ACREAGE. MAR 23 1941

This is indicated in the report, which shows a gain of 1,605,001 acres in Georgia farm land in 1940 over 1930. It also shows there were 465,448 more acres harvested in 1940 than in 1930.

The average size of Georgia farms showed a hike from 86.4 acres in 1930 to 109.6 acres ten years later.

The land acreage farmed and also the size of the farms both showed increases. The number of farms decreased nearly 40,000, with a loss of 44,000 tenant families, yet in spite of this, more land was cultivated. This would indicate that many of the tenants just simply quit farming and worked by the day or week, remaining in the same house, located on the same farm he had previously been "farming."

The report further shows a decrease of $96,993,000 in the value of Georgia farm lands and buildings during the ten years. The average value per farm remained almost the same at $2,223, but the value per acre dropped in 10 years from $26.15 to $20.28 an acre.

There was a decrease of 37,570 in the number of mules on farms since 1930, which might give a hint that tractors and other machinery are taking their place. MAR 23 1941

The increasing interest in the state in livestock growing is revealed by the figures showing there were 133,000 more cows on Georgia farms in 1940 than in 1930. Hogs showed a gain of 293,813 in 1940 over 1930. This gain is in spite of the fact that approximately one million hogs are processed annually at the meat-packing plants in the state.

A gain of 300,000 chickens is also shown in the report.

GEORGIA FARM FACTS.

Other United States census reports issued on Georgia agriculture show the following farm facts: MAR 23 1941

No. of Farms	Owners	Tenants
1910	291,027	88,768	190,990
1920	310,732	94,575	206,954
1925	249,095	81,108	159,008
1930	255,598	70,596	174,390
1935	250,544	75,857	164.331
1940	216,033	76,103	129,850

Constitution
Atlanta, Georgia

Farm Vs. City

APR 28 1941

Georgia's farm population dropped off 3.4 per cent during the depression of the thirties, a condition not surprising in view of current trends in southern agriculture.

In some ways this decrease has been a good thing. From other standpoints, it has been bad. Although the Bureau of the Census reports only upon the mathematical factor, certain general trends are well known which, when taken as a complete picture, indicate that Georgia may expect a further reduction in actual farmers and may hope for an increase in the number of small landholders who divide their time between industry and agriculture.

APR 28 1941

Mechanization has played a large part in that three plus per cent reduction.

Farmers have been able to replace manpower by gasoline power and operate larger tracts with fewer employes. In many instances it has been the sharecropper who lost out, and, losing out, moved to the relief rolls or the marginal employment ranks in the cities. Acreage reduction programs have had the same effect, and an increase in acreage used could not be expected to reverse the trend because of the mechanization factor, which will loom larger and larger in southern economy.

A still greater factor has been the steady, if slower movement of youth away from the farms. They have received a minimum of education in many instances, but generally enough to open their eyes to the hopelessness of sharecropper parents. The desire to seek employment in industry has brought them to the cities, and a surprising percentage has been able to hang on. They will benefit today from the expansion of the war industries and probably never will return to the farm, come relief rolls or what may.

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Another trend, however, is shown in the census report on the same subject dealing with the state of Connecticut. There an increase in farm population of 19.8 per cent was recorded. This reflects a movement back to the country on the part of city dwellers, who do not necessarily farm their land in the true sense of the word. They live on farms, grow foods for their own consumption and because of the commuter trains and high-speed roadways, are able to get away from the grind of New York, Hartford, Bridgeport and New Haven. It is fashionable—and healthy.

New conditions will accelerate this trend all over the country. High-speed highways where commuter trains are not feasible, post-war aircraft development and shortened hours of labor will greatly increase the number of those who buy small acreage lots and small farms near large cities. It is a good trend, and in the long run cities per se inevitably will dwindle.

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Even now the tendency is to place industries in areas where employes can offset the pace and the cost of modern life by living away from crowded areas and gain recreation and health in the surrounding countryside. It is this type of balanced economy for which the south is ideally situated. It should make the most of it.

Telegraph
Macon, Georgia

AUG 2 1941

Negro Farmers

J. A. HARPER of Taliaferro county says few Negroes will take the trouble to farm correctly unless they are followed up and superintended closely. They run from grass instead of fighting it. He says he believes it is fairer to the Negroes and to the land owners to hire them for wages, and direct their work. They are good workers, but not when left to themselves. If they are not followed up they slight their work. He says that has been his experience through many years.

Christian Index
Jackson, Tennessee

Farm Foreclosures In 1941 Show Decline 41 Percent

MAY 3 1941

Farm foreclosures in 1940 showed a decline of 41 percent from the previous year, the U. S. Department of Agriculture said today. The total of 20,950, estimated by the Farm Credit Administration is the smallest number of foreclosures in any year in the 7 years for which it has records. Of this number, 7,836 were foreclosed by individual mortgage holders 3,190 by the Federal land banks, and 3,187 by commercial banks. Insurance company foreclosures were 2,576 and Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation foreclosures 2211 Miscellaneous foreclosures numbered 1,950.

MAY 3 1941

During the fourth quarter of the year, foreclosures declined to the lowest quarterly level since 1934, and a 24 percent decline, from the third quarter, in foreclosures by the Federal land banks and the Federal Farm Mortgage Corporation more than compensated for a 7 percent increase in foreclosures by lenders other than the Farm Credit Administration.

Constitution
Atlanta, Georgia

Aid in Keeping Negroes Upon Farms Is Urged

College Head Says Low Income Is Serious Handicap.

SEP 17 1941

SAVANNAH, Ga., Sept. 16.—(AP)—An urgent plea for national, state and local aid in keeping Negroes on the farm was voiced here today by the president of Georgia State College, Benjamin F. Hubert.

In many instances, he said, due to drouth followed by excessive rainfall, there are small yields of food and feed crops in Georgia this year, and especially on small farms.

Many of the farms will make less than 500 pounds of lint cotton, Hubert said, and "where farms are worked by tenants or sharecroppers it will require much more than that amount to satisfy the landlord for his interest in the year's farm program."

Only recently, Hubert asserted, a group seeking to better their condition were advised by federal officials that they could not grow tobacco or peanuts on their farms, thus presenting "a serious question to many Negro farm families who have struggled for many years to hold together small plots of land."

SEP 17 1941

One family told him, he said, that they made six bales of cotton last year but doubted if they would make one bale this year.

"'Peas and potatoes may satisfy the older people,'" he quoted one of them as saying, "'but the children want cash. They will leave and go elsewhere seeking this ready cash if they cannot find it on the farm.'"

Hubert directed his appeal to agricultural leaders and suggested a study of individual family needs as a means of setting up a program which will keep the Negro farmer on the farm.

Wadley Ga. News 9-18-41

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ILLINOIS

Chicago Tribune
Chicago, Illinois
Illinois Cotton

[Wide World Photo.]

Geraldine Stokley, 4, fashions a crown of Illinois cotton.

—

Golden Gardens, Ill., Oct. 4 [Special].—Joseph Jethroe, local truck farmer, has celebrated St. Clair county's first cotton picking day. He raised, experimentally, a bale and a half of long staple cotton to promote cotton as a second crop for farmers unsuccessful with ordinary southern Illinois crops.

Times-Picayune
New Orleans, La.

Farm Owners Increase

Census bureau statistics on Louisiana farm tenancy reflect a favorable situation from one aspect. In 10 years the number of full owners of farms has increased by 6000 and of part owners by 1000.

It may be looking through the wrong end of the telescope to hail the advance in farm ownership rather than the reduction in tenantry. The proportion of the latter still is too high—59 per cent. Ten years ago it was higher still, of course—66 per cent. And then there has been a net reduction in the farm operator population of about 11,000.

There are 10,000 fewer sharecroppers than in 1930, and 8000 fewer tenants of other and more firmly established types—a gross reduction of about 18,000. The figures thus reflect both the dispersal of the farm population, copiously documented from other sources, and the transition of some thousands of tenants to the ownership class.

Among the tenants, the sharecropper proportion still is only slightly less than it was 10 years ago. For while there has been a marked decrease in the percentage of white sharecroppers, the percentage of Negro sharecroppers among all Negro tenants is some 6 per cent greater. The Negro sharecropper is not turning into tenant, and the tenant not turning into full or part owner, as is the trend among the white farm operators.

March 27/41

Negro operators have, in fact, accounted for all the withdrawals from Louisiana farms in the past decade, and then some. Their decrease has been 14,000; the white increase, 3000. Against a decline of 15,000 among Negro tenants of all types, there has been an increase of less than 1000 among Negro owners and part owners.

Kansas City Call
Kansas City, Mo.

FAMILIES ARE DRIVEN AWAY FROM FARMS

APR 18 1941

State Senator Said to Own Peonage Farm Where Negroes Mistreated

WASHINGTON, D. C.—(ANP)—Sharecroppers in Louisiana are still being driven from their little farms and subjected to peonage according to information from reliable sources in that state.

The latest case has to do with Rexmere Plantation, owned by a state senator, where overseers are brutally mistreating Negro workers and forcing upon them all of the evils revealed in past stories and even more.

APR 18 1941

In this instance Nelson Cannady, sharecropper, and his family and friends fled from the peonage plantation after one of the men, an overseer, had hit Cannady over the head with a club and had drawn a pistol on his daughter.

Accorrding to Cannady, Charlie Smith, son of his friend, Leon Smith, went out to work one morning and the overseer wanted him to work in the water. Smith refused to work in the swamp because he had just gotten over an attack of influenza, so in the course of the discussion which followed, the overseer, a man by the name of Pond, struck Smith with a club.

Intricate spy systems used on the plantation connect all parts of the huge farm and every move of the workers is carefully checked and watched. The community store has piles of bills against each worker and no one is permitted to purchase anywhere else other than the store.

Ownership of the farm is said to bevested in one Sen. Woods, a member of the state legislature, who is cognizant of the goings-on at the plantation.

At one time, recently 11 workers, including Cannady and his family and friends, fled the plantation in fear of their lives. Friends aided them to get away from the horror

farm and h[illegible] kan[illegible] them since.

APR 18 1941

But those who are still on the farm are subjected to treatment far worse than can be imagined it is reported, and the actions of the overseer are well known through out the community.

Jackson, Miss. Daily Clarion Ledger
March 24, 1941

Delta Committee Gives New Change In Cotton Shows

GREENVILLE, March 23 — Announcement was made this week by Rev. H. H. Humes, pastor of St. Paul M. B. church, editor of the Delta Leader President of the Delta Committee, a delta wide organization, that arrangements have been made by both races of Cleveland to give the city one day of the Delta Cotton Makers' Jubilee, which was scheduled for two days in Greenville. The plan now calls for the celebration in Cleveland on April 29 and in Greenville April 30.

The change, said Rev. Humes was necessitated because of the wide spread interest in both sections of the Delta for this type of program and the conveniences it allowed jointly for the thousand visitors expected to attend the affair. Officials of both cities and counties promised one hundred per cent cooperation in every way. The Cleveland meetings will be held at the Courthouse while the Greenville meetings will be held at the No. 2 school.

Among the nation's outstanding Negro leaders who have been invited to speak and take part in the panal discussions are, Dr. George W. Carver world famed scientist and his assistant Dr. A. H. Curtis of Tuskegee, Ala.; A. L. Holsey, secretary of the Negro Business League, of Tuskegee, Dr. Mary L. Betune, head of the division of N.Y.A. of negroes, Washington D. C.; President Wm. H. Bell of Alcorn College, Alcorn, Miss., Dr. Cornelius King, head of the Negro division of the A.A.A. Washington, D. C., Rev. Channing Tobias senior secretary of the Negro division of the Y.M.C.A. and advisor of affairs in the National Defense setup, New York City.

Among the delta's white citizens who are interested Oscar Wolfe, Duncan, State Senator; Hon. Oscar Johnston, head of Sheriff Ed Rayner of Bolivar County, A. H. Ramsey, county superintendent of Education, Hubert Eustice and W. E. Kent.

Among the other features of the event will be the mammoth Jubilee Parade, Spirituals and Jubilees by the 200 voice choir in each city and intermittent concerts by the 62 piece band from Alcorn.

Officers of the Delta Committee other than Rev. Humes are: Dr. L. Delane, Greenville; chairman of the Board, H. M. Nailor, president of Levye Chapple, Greenville, director of public relations Prof B. L. Bell is chairman of local arrangements committee at Cleveland while Thos. Bibbs is vice chairman and Amsey Moore is secretary.

Hattiesburg, Miss. American
April 3, 1941

Example

Small farmers in Mississippi have a remarkable example of self-sufficiency in the immense Delta Pine plantation at Scott, Miss.

The plantation, owned by a British syndicate, is managed by Oscar Johnston, president of the National Cotton Council and one of the world's cotton experts.

In an address yesterday to social welfare workers meeting at Jackson, Mr. Johnston described some of the plantation's economy.

He said of the 821 negro families at Scott only a "handful" ever had been "on relief" because they have been able to sustain themselves.

Eighty-nine per cent of the families have their own gardens, pigs, chickens and turkeys; and 70 per cent have their own milch cows.

If tenant farmers on the world's largest plantation can support themselves with products supplementing their cotton revenue then surely farmers elsewhere, by practicing thrift and enterprise, can do the same thing.

Chicago Defender
Chicago, Illinois

GREENVILLE IS PREPPING FOR COTTON FETE

APR 26 1941

Delta Committee Set To Arrange Entertainment For 10,000 Visitors

GREENVILLE, Miss. — Announcement was made this week by Levye Chapple, director of public relations of the Delta committee, that arrangements had been complete for the entertainment of 10,000 visitors, who are expected to attend the Delta Cotton Makers' Jubilee, which will be held in Cleveland on April 29 and Greenville on April 30.

Opening the affair in each city on both days will be a gigantic National Defense, Cotton and Americanism parade. Highlights of the parades will be the crack 62-piece band of Alcorn A. and M. college and the 100-piece girls' Drum and Bugle Corps of Booker T. Washington high school in Memphis. Thousands of school children will also participate.

APR 26 1941

National Speakers

National big-wigs, who have accepted invitations and who will be present to speak on the various programs include Dr. A. H. Curtis, assistant to Dr. George W. Carver, Tuskegee Institute, Ala.; Albon Holsey, field officer of the AAA and evecutive secretary of the National Negro Businesh League; Dr. Cornelius King, special assistant to the governor of the Farm Credit Administration, Washington, D. C.; Lieut. Lawrence A. Oxley, supervisor, Negro Placement Service Unit of the Social Security Board; Dr. William H. Bell, president Alcorn college, Alcorn, Miss.

To Feature Dancing

Both cities will have dances to climax their day's affairs. At Cleveland the Purple and Gold Serenaders will play for a dance at the Little school, while Duke Ellington and his internationally famous orchestra will furnish music for the grand jubilee ball in Greenville on April 30 at No. Two school auditorium.

APR 26 1941

Queen Contest

With a large number of young women in each of the Delta counties canvassing friends, the contest for the election of the "Queen of the Delta Cotton Makers" will be a big thing within itself.

The queen will be selected on April 25 and Duke Ellington will officially crown her at the jubilee ball in Greenville.

Another highlight of the jubilee will be the holding of group conferences and discussions affecting the national defense setup at intervals. Ministers, teachers, business men will have special meetings at various places in the cities.

Commercial Appeal
Memphis, Tennessee

NEGROES ARE URGED TO STAY IN SOUTH

Thousands Attend Annual Event [illegible] Clarksdale

AUG 15 1941

Special to The Commercial Appeal

CLARKSDALE, Miss., Aug. 14.—Ten thousand negro tenants and their families were guests of the Coahoma County Farm Bureau here Thursday in an all-day gathering held at the Clarksdale Community Ball Park, and heard farm leaders discuss future plans that will work to the advantage of the negroes in this section.

The meeting was arranged by Hudson J. Kyle, president of the Coahoma County Farm Bureau, which boasts of 4053 members, one of the largest memberships in the South. Mr. Kyle opened the meeting and presented Ransome Aldrich of Michigan City, who is president of the Mississippi Farm Bureau.

In his address Mr. Aldrich declared that the Farm Bureau was making a strenuous effort in Washington to obtain a permanent parity for farm products, and if this was done, that the negro would share in the benefits to be derived. He pointed out that whenever the white man prospered in the South, the negro saw better times.

Mr. Aldrich asked the negroes to remain in the South and not seek jobs in the East and North, where temporary high wages were being paid. He explained that no section of the country offered better opportunities than the South for the negro who was industrious and willing to work.

Dan Crumpton, superintendent of education of the Coahoma County schools, spoke of the improved educational facilities of this section.

Walker Davis, negro speaker of Milestone, urged his people to "stick by the South," where the negro would find his best friends among the white people.

Thousands of watermelons were served during the day.

H. J. [illegible], agricultural county agent, said the gathering, inaugurated last year to promote better inter-racial relations, was a success.

AUG 15 1941

Jackson, Miss., News
November 10, 1941

WHY THEY ARE POOR

Yankee economists who are always yipping about the deplorable condition of Southern tenant farmers, both white and black, ought to come South and make a first-hand study of causes for current conditions.

One of the first persons on whom they should call for authentic information is our venerable friend, M. A. McKinnon, a country store and cotton gin operator at Bowmantown, a village up in Tate county. In the current issue of the Tate County Democrat Mr. McKinnon tells this story.

> Charlie Boyd, a negro farmer near here, with only the assistance of his wife, who was handicapped with a young child, made 16 bales of cotton. Investigation showed that he made more cotton than 8 white families who live not far away. The reason is that while Charlie, under the direction of his landlord, was plowing in December and January when the weather was fitting, the white folks I have in mind were riding the milk trucks to town or sitting around the country stores telling tales not only of the present, but of the long ago, very long ago. That sort of thing don't make cotton nor corn. It don't get you a durned thing but a bad reputation. It don't pay any debts you have contracted, and it don't provide for more credit from the ones who have trusted you. But, oh hell, what's the use of wasting time on such cattle?
>
> "It rained and it hailed and it's cold stormy weather" says an old song. The rain last week caused almost all worthy enterprises to cease. Too wet to pick cotton or pull corn. The little pick-up truck drivers hunted in vain for anything to haul. The owners won't do a darned thing but "haul." "Me pick cotton? Who in hell you talking to? I'm a hauler," says this fellow. Well, there we are.

That succinctly tells at least one of the reasons why we have so many poor tenant farmers in Mississippi. They are just too dog-goned lazy, onery and shiftless to make an earnest effort to better their own condition. If Yankee economists have a practical remedy for conditions such as Mr. McKinnon describes the South would be glad to hear it.

We have thousands of tenant farmers here in Mississippi who, if they were given fertile farms of 100 acres each, ample work stock, and free financing for one year, would be back in dire poverty within less than three years.

Dyersburg, Tenn. Gazette
March 21, 1941

Negro Farm Boys To Hold Contests Here

Opening at 10 o'clock tomorrow morning the Dyer County Hurricane Chapter and Bruce High N. F. A. Chapter will sponsor and participate in their annual district elimination. Some 200 or 300 negro farm boys are expected to be here throughout the day.

The judging will consist of poultry, potatoes, corn, mules and dairy cows and swine, everything being favorable. Following the judging in the morning some 4 or 5 stiff basketball games will be payed, H. C. Hardy states. After which the schools will compete in a program filled with public speaking and a quartet singing. Five or six leading high schools from five counties will tour the city some time in the afternoon.

The entire program will be centered around Bruce High School.

Somerville, Tenn., Falcon
November 6, 1941

NEGRO FARMERS TO LEARN ABOUT INCREASING FOOD

McAdams Sloan Will Hold Series Of Meetings Over County

A schedule of meetings for negro farmers in Fayette County, at which the national Food for Defense program will be explained, has been arranged by McAdams Sloan, assistant county agent in negro work.

In his announcement, the assistant agent says:

"Every negro farmer in Fayette County, whether landowner, renter or sharecropper, is being called upon by the U. S. Department of Agriculture to join a national campaign to increase certain food products needed in our National Defense and to better improve the health of our own people in 1942.

"All negro farmers and other interested in the campaign are hereby given notice and urged to be present at the following places in order to learn just how to proceed to meet the needed increase and thereby aid in this worthy undertaking. Your failure to join in this campaign means to lend aid to those who are enemies of Democracy.

"All meetings will be held at 2:00 p.m., except where otherwise mentioned."

The schedule of meetings is as follows: Monday, Nov. 10—Mosby School; Tuesday, Nov. 11—Oakland School and Smith School, 3:30 p.m.; Wednesday, Nov. 12—Braden School; Thursday, Nov. 13—Bernard School; Monday, Nov. 17—Pleasant Grove School; Tuesday, Nov. 18—Morrow Grove; Wednesday, Nov. 19— Union Grove; Friday, Nov. 21—Somerville and Temple of God at 8:00 p.m.